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ARCHITECTURE, BUILDING, CONTRACTING & DEVELOPING

May 2025

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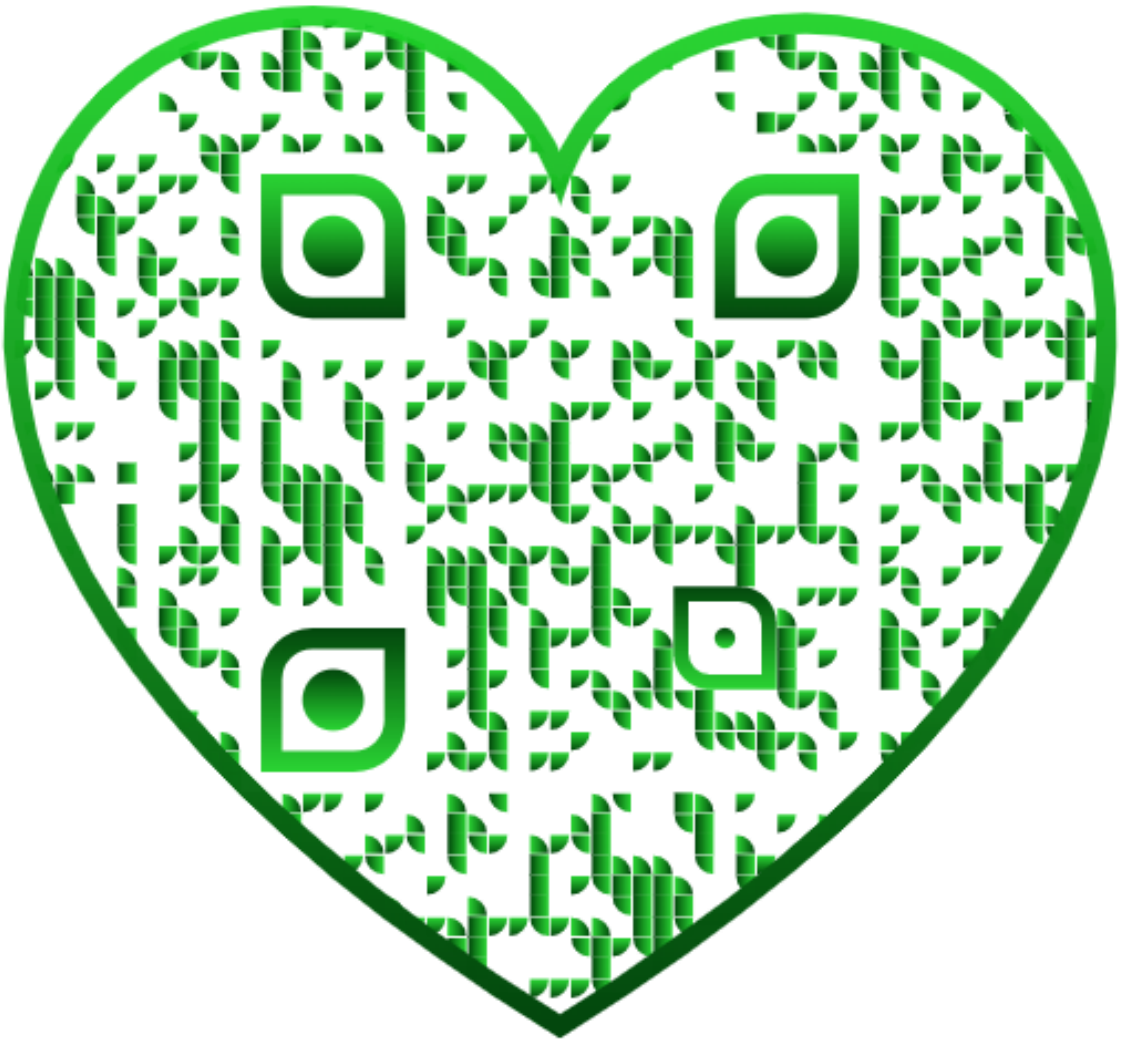

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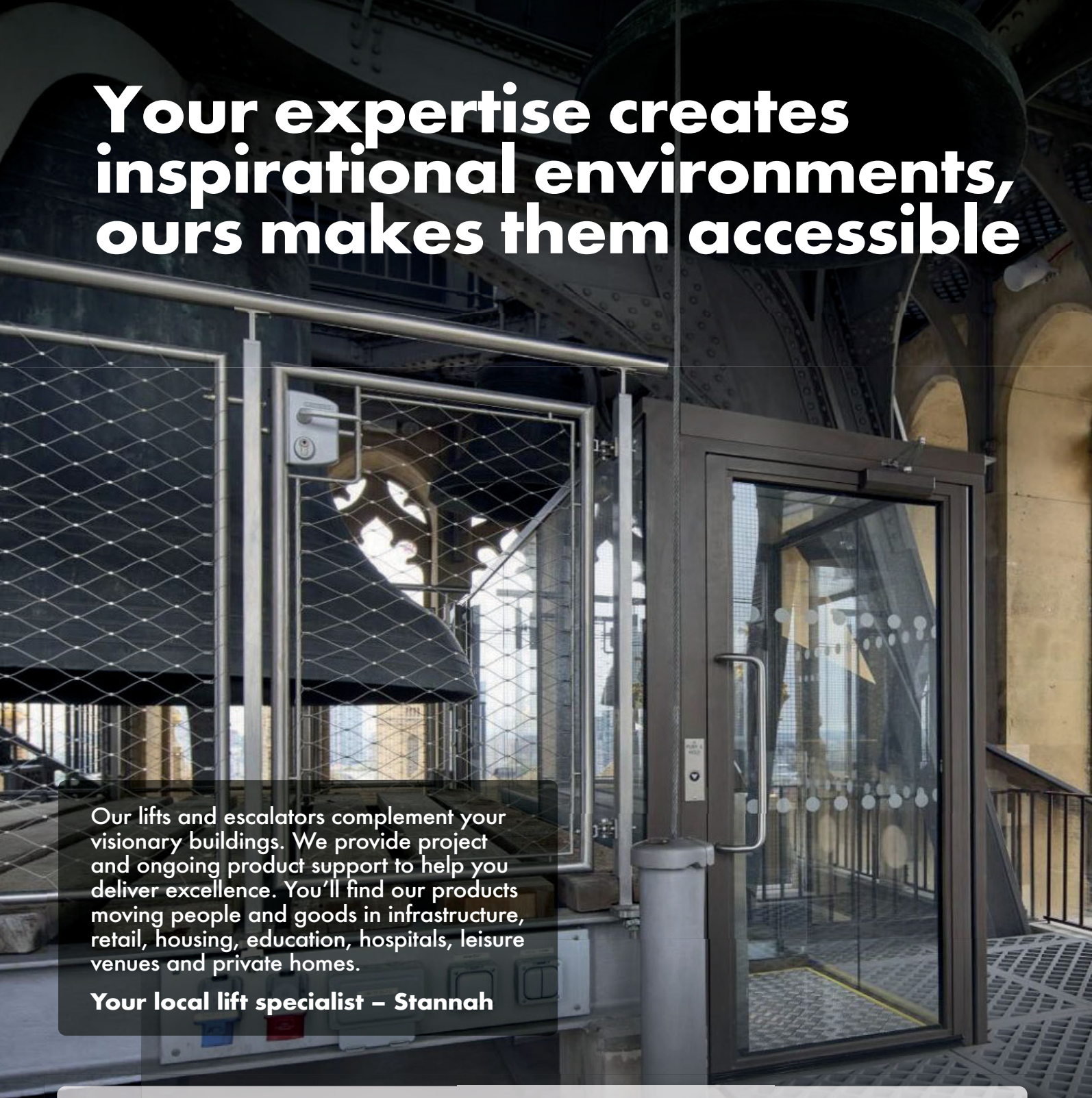

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JJ1

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on the cover

Schlüter-Systems offers everything needed to create a stylish and fully functioning wet environment. Such products from the KERDI range, including waterproofing sealing bands, pipe collars and prefabricated corner pieces, are all designed to make waterproofing a wet area a breeze, all whilst forming a complete system that leaves no gap exposed to the elements. **See page 32 for more details.**

welcome...

...to the May issue of ABC&D magazine...

This month we take a look at how The Vawdrey House has taken inspiration from the Grade II listed facade of No 2 London Bridge to create a new reception and atrium space on page 04. The interior overhaul combines a subtle Art Deco vibe with a light and airy feel, affording it a presence that is now much more suited to its location.

On page 10 we explore Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios and Twelve Architects' retrofit and regeneration of Plant Basingstoke – formerly known as Mountbatten House. The architecturally-significant, tiered building was originally designed to create contact with, and access to, nature within all the office spaces. The regeneration has now built upon this ethos, balancing function with environmental responsibility.

May's Hot Topic considers the pressing challenge created by mould growth in social housing on page 14; Wayne Chissell explains how PMMA liquid-applied membranes contribute to more sustainable new builds and refurbishments on page 24; and on page 30, Tim Spann discusses what housebuilders should look for in a kitchen partner.

Fabco explains why steel windows and doors are still the go-to for environmentally-conscious customers on page 36; we take a look at the interior '-core' trends that are making an impact in 2025 on page 42; The Heating Trades Network UK clears up some common misconceptions around heat pump installations on page 47; and on page 51, Ben Humphries examines why Environmental Product Declarations are becoming an important measure for stair manufacturers.

...from all at ABC&D...

abc

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heritage façade style reflected in reimagined *interior*

The Vawdrey House *has refurbished the reception and atrium of No 2 London Bridge, a Grade II listed building. Without any structural changes, the London-based design studio has totally reimagined the space, giving it a dramatic and opulent feel, with a nod to the historic façade outside...*

The listed façade is a strong feature on the bridge, with the popular London Grind restaurant occupying one half, but the heritage feel did not extend inside and the previous office reception was feeling tired.

The client saw the potential being wasted in the huge space, within a stones throw of Borough Market, and asked The Vawdrey House to overhaul the interior and entrance to give it a presence more suited to the location, and to sit alongside the newly refurbished tenanted floors on the river side of the building.

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Slalom Consulting

Providing a portal from old to new, these spaces offer more than just a transition, they have become a setting in their own right...

The Vawdrey House

Previously clad from top to toe in limestone, the space was huge and although the atrium was top lit with daylight, the actual reception area, set below the office floors above, felt much darker by contrast, and lacked atmosphere.

On entering, the doors have been refurbished with black framework and new signage externally, teamed with a new set of full height sliding steel-framed Jansen inner doors, referencing the fenestration design of the original sash windows outside.

The new lobby created within, is painted in deep blue-black paint and punctuated with bronze railroad lanterns.

A hint of the Orient Express pervades the reception desk with its high gloss panelling, Carrara marble counter top and dramatic brass overhead framework. Tan leather banquette seating, with little marble bistro tables, offers visitors a place to perch while waiting or taking calls, beneath the soft glow of Tom Dixon wall lights and backed by a smoky duck-egg blue panelled wall.

The main lounge area is luxuriously enveloped within a 'booth' of rust linen drapery. Candy coloured velvet chairs nestle on liquorice striped circular rug. This creates a cosy seating area within this cavernous space.

The curved wall has been given a smooth coat of polished concrete providing a suede-rich backdrop to the pops of colour.

The atrium, once bland and distant, now reaches out to you as you enter – with rich inky blue painted panelling. A bespoke semi-circular panel detail provides another nod to exotic travel with a slight Art Deco vibe. Black and white floor tiles work with the liquorice rug and rustic oak planks to break up the large floor space into distinct zones. With the fabulous concentric squares design in the atrium providing striking impact when viewed from all the way up the building.

Bespoke manifestations on the atrium glazing echo the semi-circular panelling design, and bespoke laser cut brass signage completes the exclusive feel.

Images: Will Scott Photography

West End's Saville Theatre to return to theatre use after 55 years

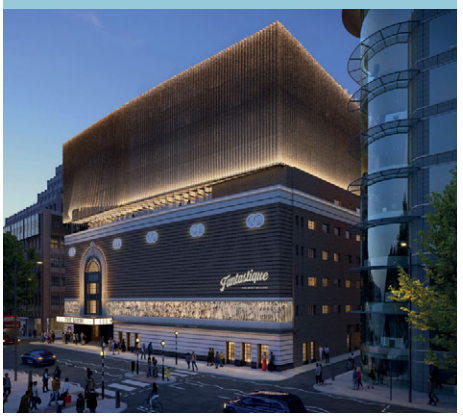
Award-winning London architecture studio SPPARC is set to return the West End's Grade II listed Saville Theatre to its original use after more than half a century following planning permission and listed building consent granted by the London Borough of Camden.

Designed on behalf of Yoo Capital, the SPPARC scheme will restore live performance to the Art Deco venue while also introducing a new boutique hotel operated by citizenM.

Set to host two shows a night, the revived Saville Theatre sits prominently within London's West End, whose theatres contribute nearly £1bn to the UK's economy every year. Key to London's cultural offering, Theatreland welcomed a record 17.3 million visitors from across the world in 2023.

Originally designed by English architect Sir Thomas Bennett, the Saville Theatre first opened its doors at 135-149 Shaftesbury Avenue in 1931. Its original interiors were lost by the time it was transformed into a two-screen cinema in 1970, with two further screens added after it became an Odeon in 2001.

SPPARC's proposals seek to ensure the Saville Theatre is once again a world-class live performance venue. The studio will re-introduce a flexible up to 622-capacity theatre with seating arranged across three levels, accessed via the reimagined historic entrance on Shaftesbury Avenue. The revived theatre draws inspiration from its lost 1930s predecessor, while reimagined to meet the expectations of contemporary audiences with its greater comfort, enhanced front of house experience across each level of the auditorium and unrestricted sightlines from every seat.



Watson Batty aims for highest design accreditation

Watson Batty Architects has started works on a new care home for Exemplar Health Care with plans to achieve the highest accreditation in design for dementia.

Construction has commenced to deliver Springfield Vale, a 33-bed complex care home in Barnsley. The scheme comprises of three units of accommodation each providing ten bedrooms with communal areas, an activities hub, a therapy room, a hair/beauty salon and communal accessible gardens.

The state-of-the-art development is to provide nursing care for adults living with complex needs arising from brain injuries, dementia, mental health conditions, neuro-disabilities and physical disabilities.

Understanding the importance that specialist design for aging and dementia has in assisting independently living, Exemplar Health Care has selected Springfield Vale to be assessed by the University of Stirling DSDC (Dementia Services Development Centre).

Stirling DCSC is an international centre of knowledge and expertise dedicated to improving the lives of people living with dementia. It draws on research and best practice from around the world by providing comprehensive up to date resources on all aspects of dementia helping to translate into policy-informing practice. It houses a design and technology suite showcasing inspiring technology and equipment, a virtual care home that allows for visualisation of new ideas, and a conference centre which hosts regular international masterclasses bringing together dementia-care experts from around the world.

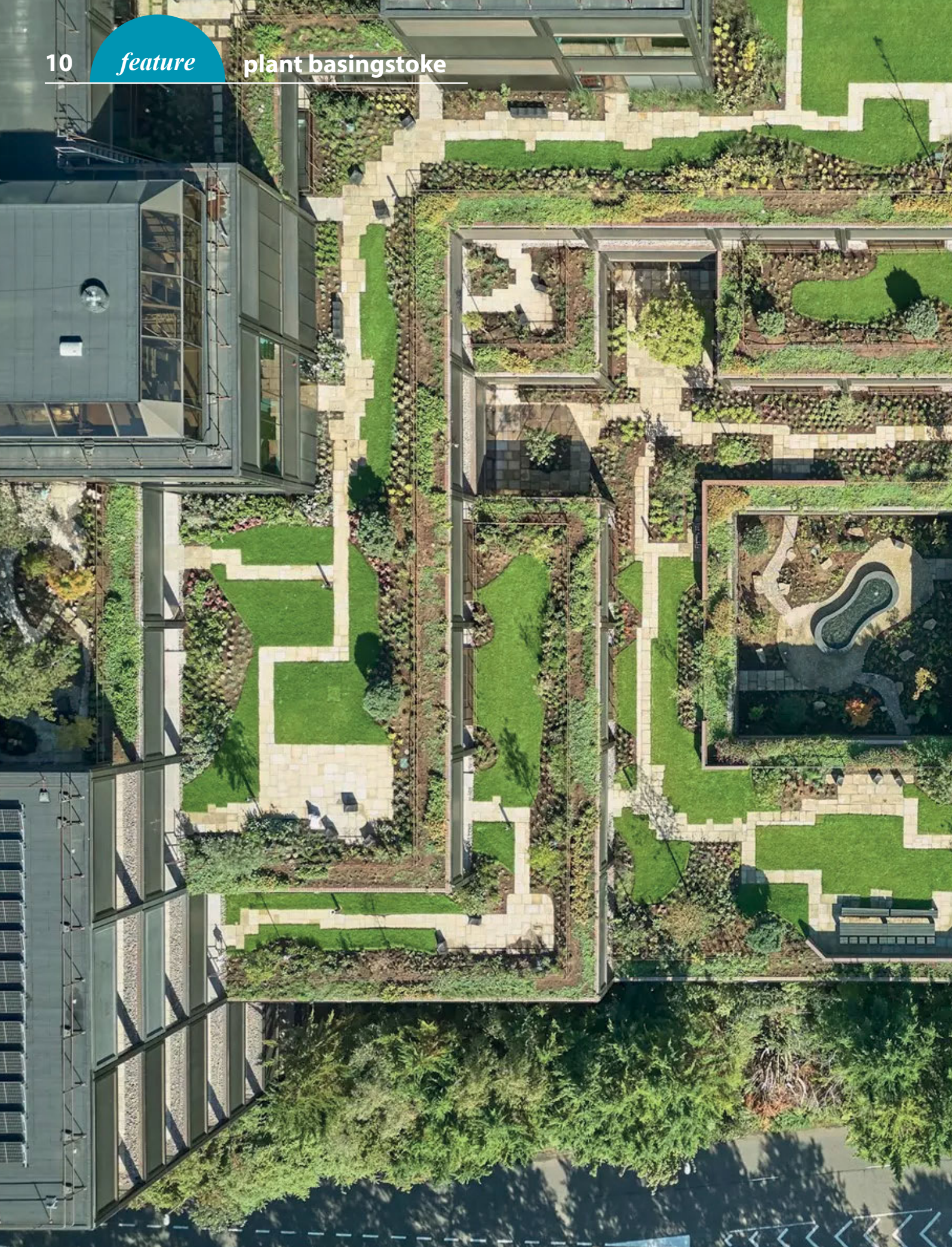
For further details, visit: **https://watsonbatty.com**

U.S. tariff uncertainty threatens to overshadow UK construction growth

Excluding the potential impacts of the recent U.S. tariff disruption on the global and UK economies, the Construction Products Association's Spring Forecasts show that construction output is only expected to recover gradually. Following two challenging years that have particularly affected the two largest sectors – private housing new build and repair, maintenance and improvement (rm&i) – total construction output is expected to grow by 1.9% in 2025 and 3.7% in 2026, from a low base.

This is a slight revision down from the Winter Forecasts due to a slow start to activity this year, weaker UK economic growth prospects, higher inflation for longer and subdued consumer and business confidence. Furthermore, rises in the National Living Wage, employers' National Insurance Contributions, and falling thresholds, from 1 April, will increase costs throughout the supply chain.

In private house building, activity continues to recover gradually, but house builders reported that it has been a slower start to this year than anticipated, as affordability and a lack of demand remain the key constraints, with mortgage rates remaining high and no government policy stimulus. Furthermore, developers working on high-rise apartment blocks continue to suffer from 6-9 month delays at the Building Safety Regulator, which disproportionally affects new house building in London and Build-to-Rent developments. On the positive side, however, the Government published its National Planning Policy Framework, and its Planning and Infrastructure Bill is currently being passed in parliament.



renewal and revival *in hampshire*

The retrofit and regeneration of Plant Basingstoke – formerly known as Mountbatten House and considered one of Britain's 15 most important listed modern buildings – was completed earlier this year. ***ABC&D*** *discovers more...*

Planning approval and listed building consent was obtained by Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios who subsequently monitored planning and listed building issues through construction. Twelve Architects completed stages 4-6 of the architectural design, including design variations under approval of conditions.

The building was originally designed in 1973 by Peter Foggo and Arup Associates Group 2 with pre-eminent garden designer, James Russell, for paper manufacturers Wiggins Teape. First christened Gateway House, the vast stepped complex comprises six levels of commercial workspace blanketed in tiered roof gardens and terraces. The gardens and building were both separately listed by English Heritage in 2015 for their design excellence and significance within British modernist architecture and horticulture.

Plant marks a major regional asset for economic development in Hampshire, offering over 19,515m² of category A and B multi-let office and amenity space. Client William Laxton of Mactaggart Family & Partners was instantly drawn to the scheme on account of the original Peter Foggo design fundamentals and the abundance of terracing, making it a singularly unique building.

Ian Taylor, Partner at Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios, said; "I am immensely proud of the role FCBStudios has played in extending the life of this seminal building designed over 50 years ago by Peter Foggo's group 2 at Arup Associates (with whom I worked in the 1980s). The building design's prescience in creating contact with, and access to, nature within all the office spaces on all levels created a legacy that even now appears forward thinking.

Our work focused on preserving the unique character of Foggo's original design while creating a framework that balances function with environmental responsibility. Plant now stands as a benchmark for retrofitting and

regeneration, a space where people and nature thrive in harmony, embodying the values we strive for in every project."

Twelve Architects and Studio Knight Stokoe have worked closely with the client, Mactaggart Family & Partners, developer Longstock Capital, contractor, CField Construction to complete the Grant Associates and Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios design, to deliver and reinstate the buildings' original pioneering design intent; to blend nature, wellbeing and the workplace seamlessly. In aspiring to the highest sustainability ratings across BREEAM 'Outstanding' and WELL Platinum certifications, Plant again pioneers a new commitment to the environment and occupant that sets a remarkable standard for future commercial workplace developments.

Prominent architectural interventions include a redesigned and expanded building entrance and reception area, enhancing the arrival experience and establishing a stronger visual connection to the verdant refurbished gardens. Double-height spaces have been formed to create vertical connections between floors, increasing the sense of openness and drawing more natural light into the plan. A striking helical staircase marks an impressive, welcoming entrance area for building users.

More recent suspended ceilings and finishes have been removed to reveal Plant's distinctive coffered slab structure and cruciform columns, preserving the building's unique architectural character. The original curtain wall system has been carefully refurbished, improving the building's thermal performance and ensuring its longevity. The mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems have been fully upgraded to enhance operational efficiency and future-proof the building, contributing to its pending 'Outstanding' BREEAM certification.

Additional new facilities, including a cafe, gym, shower and changing rooms, secure cycle storage, and a multi-purpose function space have been incorporated to meet the needs of modern tenants.

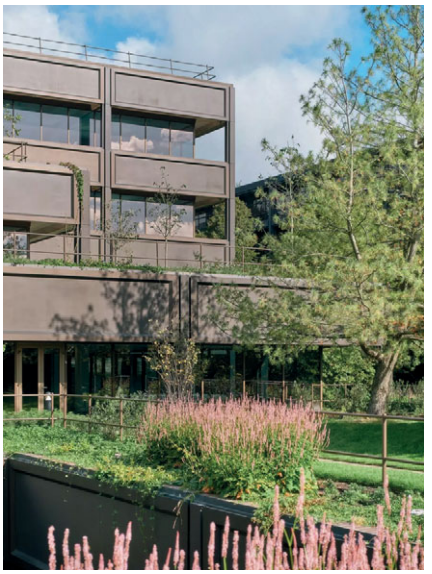
A key driver of the project was to greatly improve access to the gardens and roof terraces, with new level access from all storeys allowing greater use and enjoyment of the much-loved and affectionately termed 'hanging gardens of Basingstoke'. Through extensive research conducted in archives at the University of York – including Russell's handwritten planting lists – the listed landscape has been adapted to be climate resilient and importantly, regenerative. In-depth analysis of the historic planting palettes was undertaken, replacing species poorly suited to exposed rooftop conditions, prioritising species that are better suited to their environment, and which foster biodiversity enhancements by helping pollinators and foragers to thrive.

Over 22,500 new plants have been introduced, along with 86 new trees to complement those already on the site. With no raised planters across the gardens, adapting the planting required close collaboration between the landscape architects, structural engineers, and soil specialists, ensuring even loading across the multi-level structure. The renewed planting design draws inspiration from the original design vision for the gardens; to be informal, elaborate, romantic, overflowing, and tumbling.

Much of the existing hardscaping has been restored, with every original paving element across the garden levels recorded and catalogued, temporarily removed through construction, and then replaced in-situ. A deteriorating pond has been replaced in the cloistered Level 2 courtyard with a sculpted contemporary water feature, honouring the original form of the pond, and helping to bring new sensory experience into the space. The revitalised gardens enhance biodiversity and create inclusive, engaging spaces for both occupants and visitors. Winding pathways and new seating areas invite exploration, offering opportunities for relaxation, socialisation, and quiet reflection.

A widely regarded exemplar of British modernism and commercial horticulture, Plant now begins its new life as a regional hub for growth, providing the right environment for occupants and nature to thrive.

Grant Associates designed the landscape to stage 4, and obtained planning approval and listed consent in 2019, before moving to a client monitoring role through construction. Studio Knight Stokoe obtained planning and listed building consent for an amended landscape scheme in 2024, based upon the principles established in the Grant Associates design, and completed the amended detailed design.



Images: Andy Stagg

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slimline solutions essential *to beating blight of mould*

Technical Manager for Wykamol, ***Kevin Topping,*** *considers the pressing challenge mould growth presents for social housing providers...*

Refurbishment measures under Initiatives such as Retrofit for the Future and the Energy Companies Obligation – known as ECO – regularly featured the use of internal or external wall insulation as a reliable way of cutting both heat loss and air leakage through the building envelope: with the latter in particular having seen countless thousands of tenants across the country benefit.

There are of course downsides to both IWI and EWI systems, with 'outsulation' often being ruled out due to conservation concerns, while both are inevitably time consuming and disruptive for residents, with decanting rarely being an affordable project option and despite Parker-Morris space standards being embedded in social housing's DNA, no matter what the room dimensions, few occupants are ever going to be keen on giving up internal area even if it is to be compensated for by an improvement in their actual comfort levels.

Awaab's Law has changed the sector's mindset

Sadly, the cost of not doing something to deal with poor insulation and weatherproofing or inherent condensation problems can be far more serious than simply feeling cramped and uncomfortable. The tragic case of a young boy from a Sudanese family who died due to severe breathing difficulties, resulted in the passing of Awaab's Law which compels social landlords to take rapid action when mould growth is identified as a risk to health. Though the problem can stem from a number of causes including damp penetrating due to leaking gutters or failed render, moisture from the interior atmosphere condensing on cold substrates is often manifested across entire estates where thermal performance is inadequate and if cavity wall or exterior wall insulation are not viable options, the building owner is almost certainly going to have to consider some form of IWI solution: with all the knock-on complications which to date have been almost impossible to avoid. These include the need to demount and often replace skirtings and architraves, along with electrical switches and sockets, while effectively insulating shallow window reveals can be a multi-dimensional nightmare. Adversity, though, has often been the inspiration for product innovation in the construction industry and a versatile new solution is quite literally being rolled out across the social housing sector on an accelerating basis.

ISO-THERM has been Wykamol's biggest selling product over recent months as specialist contractors, housing management service companies and merchant stockists have moved to meet demand from councils and housing associations seeking a quick and economic means of raising wall performance to a point where condensation and mould growth become a bad memory for their tenants. Aside from the technical benefits to the membrane system, the fact that the one-day training courses can equip a variety of tradespeople – including multi-trades personnel with no plastering experience – to carry out the installations, is proving a genuine bonus. Furthermore, as long as existing plasterwork remains sound, there is no need to hack it off back to the brickwork or blockwork before applying.

Amongst the early adopters was Wythenshawe Community Housing Group which has some 14,000 homes across Greater Manchester and prides itself on offering residents high quality accommodation to meet the needs of a diverse population, including those with complex health issues. Initially, a training session was held for a mixed group of WCHG staff, including surveyors and housing managers: allowing them to understand some of Ithe product's technical benefits, such as the ability to create an isolating layer which keeps damp out of dwellings and prevents salts building up.

Offering a thermal performance equivalent to 25mm of polystyrene, the membrane is smoothed onto a layer of special adhesive using an OX Speedskim semi-flexible plastering rule, before the thin skim is applied.

Speaking about the landlord's reasons for utilising the product, WCHG's Contract Manager for reactive repairs, Pete Leonard, said: "We have used Wykamol-Triton for a number of years and are always looking for new products that can help us make our homes more energy efficient and minimize disturbance for our customers. This product is easy to use, cuts down on waste also reduces manual handling. We look forward to seeing the long-term benefits in the future." A second generation, 6mm thick graphene-based version is to be introduced in Q3 this year.

Moving on up... *LIFTEX 2025*

Specifying, upgrading or installing lifts as part of a building project? We take a sneak preview of ***LIFTEX 2025****, the UK's only lift and escalator industry event...*

The Building Safety Act and associated secondary legislation mean that mobility and evacuation should be at the forefront of any building design and modernisation planning, explains Oliver Greening, Show Director at LIFTEX 2025.

Keeping up to date with standards

"Whilst new standards and regulations improve the evacuation lift provision in new buildings, improving the safety in existing buildings can potentially pose challenges. How do you stay up to speed with the latest regulations and upgrade or purchase innovative equipment to ensure that you're compliant?"

"This is one of the main drivers behind the upcoming LIFTEX 2025 event. Our free seminar programme has always been a big draw, but now it's an essential element for everyone visiting. From modernisation of ageing lift stock to evacuation protocols, we're bringing together the leading voices actively shaping the conversations around these crucial topics."

The free seminar programme runs across both days offering expert advice on modernisation (upgrading and future-proofing lift systems), evacuation and safety (best practices for emergency preparedness), regulatory updates (the standards that are needed in order to be compliant) and the Building Safety Act (and its secondary legislation).

A highlight of the programme are sessions hosted by Rachel Smalley, Head of Inclusive Design at Jacobs, who will explore the increasingly vital role of evacuation lifts in modern building design. Drawing on her extensive experience chairing the BS 8300 committee on accessible design and her work on policy, Smalley will challenge attendees to reconsider evacuation lifts not merely as regulatory compliance but as essential infrastructure for truly inclusive buildings.

Rachel will examine different end user group requirements, how these lifts enhance building functionality, and align with current policy frameworks. This presentation offers valuable insights for building owners, facilities managers, engineers, and lift industry professionals seeking to implement inclusive safety solutions that meet policy and end user requirements while future-proofing their properties. Join us for a comprehensive overview that bridges technical requirements with practical implementation strategies.

The session will cover:

- The groups of people who may require or benefit from evacuation lifts
- How evacuation lift integration enhances the overall building useability and future-proofs
- The policy landscape, standards and guidance
- Implementation challenges – practical considerations for retrofitting existing buildings versus new construction planning
- The long-term benefits of evacuation lifts beyond regulatory compliance

"Evacuation planning can't be one-size-fits-all. Rachel's session will explore how different user groups benefit from evacuation lifts and how these systems future-proof our buildings."

The latest innovation on show

This free seminar programme is in addition to an exhibition of over 100 suppliers showcasing everything from passenger and home lifts to escalators and building hoists.

On the show floor, UK exhibitors are joined by their international counterparts from Croatia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands and Turkey.

Greening continues: "Visitors will find everything under one roof, from contractors and service companies to component suppliers and support services."

Now in its 37th year, LIFTEX is organised by the Lift and Escalator Industry Association (LEIA). 11-12 June 2025, ExCeL, London.

Tickets are free: ***www.liftexshow.com***

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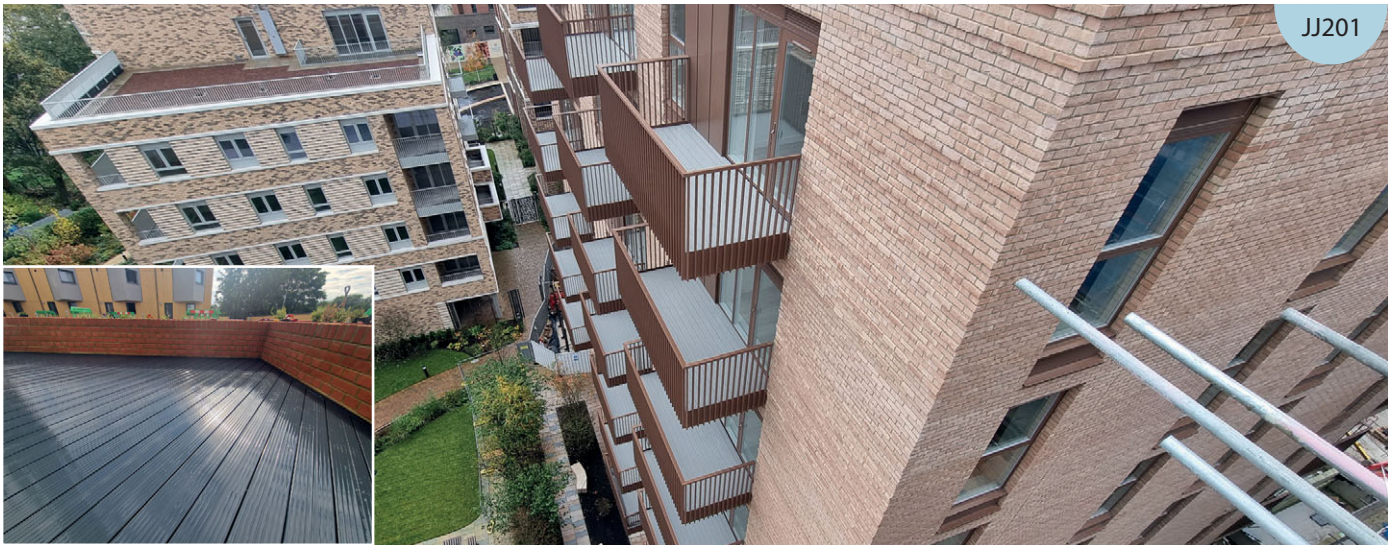

BSR compliance made simple *with AliDeck aluminium solutions*

Navigating BSR requirements with confidence
Since the introduction of the Building Safety Regulator (BSR), balcony design has come under greater scrutiny. Developers, architects, and contractors now face the challenge of specifying materials that are not only safe but fully documented and traceable.

At AliDeck, we've built our aluminium product range around these needs. Whether you're working on a high-rise new build or a remediation project, our systems are designed to help you meet BSR expectations smoothly and effectively.

Aluminium decking: the foundation of safe balconies
AliDeck aluminium decking systems are widely used across balconies, walkways, and terraces for one simple reason: they're built to perform. Every board in our range is non-combustible, achieving Euroclass A2-s1, d0 fire ratings, far surpassing the minimum standards required under BSR rules.

Our boards are manufactured in the UK, made for quick installation, and come complete with structural calculations, fire test reports, and guidance documents. This ensures your specification doesn't just meet compliance—it simplifies it.

Integrated drainage that goes beyond compliance
Water management is a key part of tenant safety, yet many systems on the market neglect it. Our aluminium drainage solutions are fully integrated into the decking and soffit design, ensuring that water is efficiently channelled away, reducing the risk of slips, water ingress, and long-term structural damage.

Each drainage component is engineered to exceed regulatory standards and supports the long-term performance of the balcony build-up. It's one more way we help keep your project aligned with the BSR's golden thread.

Soffit solutions that combine safety and style
Under-balcony soffits often play a secondary role in design – until it comes to fire safety. With AliDeck's AliClad Flow system, soffits become a strength, not a risk.

Our aluminium soffit panels are non-combustible, easy to install, and pre-finished for a sleek appearance. Designed to integrate seamlessly with our decking and drainage products, they ensure that even the underside of your balcony structure is BSR-ready

Compliant balustrades for every balcony type
Safety doesn't stop at the edge, and our range of aluminium balustrades ensures full protection without compromise. From Juliette balconies to traditional spindle options, and the contemporary Insight Glass system, we provide tested, durable solutions with full documentation ready for review.

Each system is pre-engineered to current UK standards and designed to install quickly on-site, reducing the risk of errors or delays during BSR inspections.

Privacy and protection with aluminium fencing
For developments that require added privacy or wind protection, our aluminium fencing and balcony divider panels provide the ideal finishing touch. These are constructed from the same non-combustible material as the rest of our range, ensuring consistency in safety and performance.

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Designed for durability and delivered with confidence
All AliDeck products come with a 30-year warranty and are designed for a 60-year life expectancy. Manufactured and powder-coated in-house in the UK, we maintain full control over quality, traceability, and turnaround times – helping dutyholders avoid unnecessary delays and meet their responsibilities under the BSR.

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Essex church chooses Style moveable walls

Partitioning expert **Style** was contracted to work with Freeland Rees Roberts Architects and Punch Construction to deliver flexible space to the main function area of St Mary the Virgin Church in Henham, Essex.

Style installed two Dorma Huppe Variflex moveable walls enabling the area to be divided into three separate rooms, one large and one small room, or left as an open plan space.

With effortless, smooth operation, these light walls can be opened and closed quickly and easily, and their exceptional 55dB acoustic ratings mean concurrent events can take place undisturbed from one another.

Variflex panels are manufactured separately to the frame, which means that the panel linings are easy to change if one is damaged or scuffed, saving both time and money.

www.style-partitions.co.uk sales@style-partitions.co.uk

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JJ5

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Official Police Security Initiative

Beautiful traditional timber sash windows *for your project*

JJ202

The Sash Window Workshop specialises in manufacturing high-quality timber sash windows that are both energy efficient and sympathetic to the architectural style of the property.

All The Sash Window Workshop's new windows are bespoke and made to your specifications. The multi-award-winning company can replicate traditional sliding sash window designs and, when required, comply with conservation area and listed building regulations.

The Sash Window Workshop offers a supply-only service nationwide, with a supply and installation service for properties in London and Southern England.

New joinery is made at its state-of-the-art manufacturing facilities in Bracknell, Berkshire, and comes fully factory finished.

New windows also have extensive guarantees, including a 50-year anti-rot guarantee for windows made using Accoya wood, the company's preferred timber.

Complying with building regulations

The Sash Window Workshop is registered with FENSA and, when required, can comply with Document L building regulations. Where specific U-values need to be met, the company will work with you to help provide a solution that meets your requirements.

Security is also an important consideration for any new windows. When required, The Sash Window Workshop can manufacture new joinery to meet Part Q Building Regulations and PAS-24 requirements.

Glass and finishing options

The Sash Window Workshop offers a wide range of glass options to meet your specifications, including acoustic glass, safety glass, and decorative or obscure glass.

New windows are double-glazed as standard but single-glazed windows can also be manufactured when required for listed buildings.

The company offers a range of finishing options, from its standard white finish to more bespoke colours and stains, including dual colour options for windows that require a different finish internally to externally.

You can also choose from a variety of ironmongery options and finishes to suit the property and your customer's preference.

Excellent customer service

The Sash Window Workshop understands the importance of ensuring that both you and your customer are happy with the product. The company prides itself on providing excellent customer service, ensuring that project deadlines are met.

A recent customer commented:"There was good communication throughout and they are clearly very organised. They have good customer service and aftercare... We are delighted with the final product."

In addition to sash windows, the company also manufactures and installs casement windows, external timber doors, and secondary glazing.

www.sashwindow.com

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PublicSectorBuilding

Doors for demanding locations: The evidence is all in Black and White

Interior timber doors required to fulfil the myriads of requirements presented by demanding locations, can often fall short of expectations. However, when it comes to those supplied by Swindon based **Vicaima**, a lifetime of performance, consistent quality and innovative design solutions, ensures trust and confidence are never misplaced.

For sectors spanning specialist living to student accommodation, Vicaima's ability to blend the right doors for demanding locations with design aspirations is perhaps epitomized by two examples from its extensive product portfolio: Lacdor® Satin White, a long-standing symbol of sustainable and practical white doors has been a firm favorite with specifiers for many years. Prized for its ultra-smooth and durable factory applied lacquered paint finish, Lacdor® incorporates solvent free and low energy technologies to safeguard sustainable product supply today and in the future. In addition, acting as a counterbalance within the monochrome look, sits the new Dekordor® HD Magnet Black. Part of the ever-growing laminates offering from Vicaima, with a robust surface finish presenting high resistance and durability for challenging spaces.

Whichever end of the spectrum is selected, these design options are available to meet stringent regulatory and performance requirements. Whether the need is for sound reduction, where acoustic parameters encompass up to 45dB; security considerations, where both Secure by Design and PAS 24 certification ensure a safe environment or indeed fire performance with EN 1634 / BS476 tested and third-party accredited fire doors and door sets in FD30, FD60 and FD90 facilitate complete peace of mind, whatever the project.

For more information about Vicaima doors for demanding locations, take a journey of discovery with the new Interactive Interior Door Selector for 2025. A constantly evolving resource, filled with the latest design inspiration, technical assistance and budgetary guidance. Helping the market stay in touch, with the very best interior doors and door sets from Vicaima, for all types of applications.

www.vicaima.com
vicaima@vicaima.com

ENQUIRIES VISIT www.abcd-info.co.uk EMAIL korucirculation@c-cms.com POST use address card

Stairways Midlands
https://stairways.co.uk/

Stairways Midlands is stepping up its partnership with Walsall College, helping develop the next generation of carpenters and joiners.

Stairways, one of the UK's leading staircase and door manufacturers, launched its collaboration with the college last year, giving students opportunities to gain real-world skills in carpentry, joinery, and manufacturing.

The company, which has three Midlands-based factories, including one in Walsall, offering more than 85,000ft² of bespoke and mass production capacity, has stepped up its offer again this year. It is offering college students employer engagement visits, a chance to work on a collaborative project, work experience placements and apprenticeships.

Karen Wood, Managing Director at Stairways, said partnerships like this are "essential for building the future workforce." She commented: "Stairways is committed to nurturing the next generation of construction professionals, both within our business and across the wider industry, through training, career development, and outreach. We're passionate about helping young people develop the practical skills that employers like us want and need."

Two new cohorts of NVQ Carpentry and Joinery students recently got the ball rolling with a visit to Stairways' Walsall factory, where Production Manager Andy Clarke gave them a behind-the-scenes tour.

Stairways is also currently employing three apprentices, all placed through Walsall College: one Level 3 Accountancy Apprentice and two Level 2 Bench Carpentry and Joinery Apprentices. The company also offers work experience placements to college students, part-funded by the Construction Industry Training Board's 'Into Work' grant, with additional funding available if placements lead to permanent jobs.

Karen Wood, herself a GoConstruct STEM Ambassador who volunteers her time to help inspire young people about careers in the construction sector, added:v"With the ongoing skills shortage in construction, we are determined to play our part in ensuring that we pass on the expertise and craftsmanship that are essential to the future of this sector.vOur partnership with Walsall College plays a key role in that, and we're proud of the success stories that have already come from it."

Last year two college students studying an NVQ in carpentry and joinery joined the team for work experience, with one landing a full-time job at the Walsall factory.

JJ204

Fortem
www.fortem.co.uk

Fortem and Birmingham City Council (BCC) are joining forces to take on the AJ Bell Great Birmingham Run in support of St Basils, a West Midlands' based charity dedicated to ending youth homelessness.

More than 20 employees from Fortem will join colleagues from Birmingham City Council to take part in the Midlands' biggest running event on 4 May 2025. Participants will run through the heart of Birmingham, passing some of the city's most iconic landmarks including the Jewellery Quarter, St Paul's Square, Cannon Hill and Bournville, with the option of completing either a half marathon or a 10k challenge.

St Basils is both a charity and a housing association that provides a holistic range of accommodation and support services to young people who are homeless, vulnerable or at risk. For over 50 years, they have been supporting young people aged 16-25, providing them with safe accommodation, support, and opportunities to rebuild their lives and achieve independence.

"We're absolutely delighted to have the brilliant teams from Fortem and Birmingham City Council running in support of St Basils," commented Barrie Hodge, Head of Fundraising and Communications, St Basils. "Taking on the Great Birmingham Run is no small feat, and we're incredibly grateful they're doing it to help young people who are facing some of the toughest challenges life can throw at them. Every step they take – and every pound they raise – will go towards giving vulnerable young people a safe place to stay, someone to talk to, and the chance to build a brighter future. From all of us at St Basils – thank you for running, fundraising, and making such a big difference."

Fortem is a property services company committed to raising the bar in social housing, providing safe, warm and decent homes for people to live in. Passionate about social housing, Fortem delivers a range of internal and external repairs on a 24/7 basis, as well as planned installations and gas services delivered by a national team of committed and driven professionals, supported by intelligent use of data and technology.

"We are incredibly proud of our team of runners, who are taking on this challenge to raise vital funds in support of vulnerable young people in our community," commented Colin Read, Operations Director (Repairs & Maintenance) at Fortem. "Helping them find a safe place to call home and work towards a brighter future is a cause close to our hearts. The team has received incredible support so far, and we'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to this fantastic cause."

Every donation helps St Basils continue their vital work, providing safe accommodation and essential support for young people in need.

JJ205

Get a handle on litter with the Barrett's Gripper

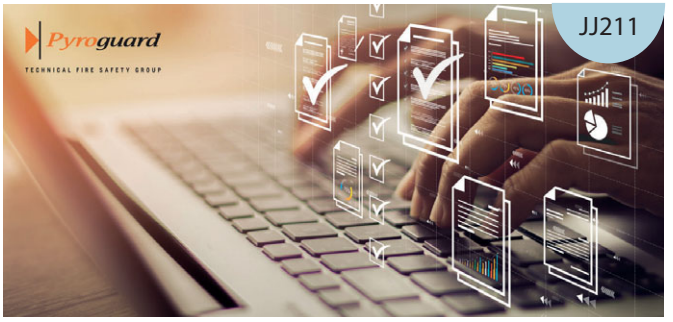
The **Barrett's** Litter Gripper is a new kind of bag holder. Its revolutionary design allows for easy disposal of rubbish and refuse while allowing maximum comfort on the hands and wrist. Litter Gripper holds the bag open leaving the other free to sweep or collect waste. Perfect for grass, leaves, cuttings or any DIY debris. Every aspect has been carefully thought through and workshopped with builders, cleaners, council workers and other regular users of similar products. This means the final design is not only easy and comfortable to use but can also be used in a wide range of indoor and outdoor applications.

JJ210

The idea for litter gripper was formed when F J Barrett and Son owner, John found increasing issues with current litter bag holders when clearing up after a job. The idea for an ergonomically correct, RSI friendly bag holder was formed and soon became the product you see today.

www.barrettslittergripper.co.uk

JJ211



Pyroguard unveils the TechLibrary

Independent provider of fire safety glass for timber, steel and aluminium applications, **Pyroguard**, is pleased to announce the launch of the Pyroguard TechLibrary – an innovative digital platform designed to make it easier for architects, specifiers and contractors to access essential technical data and test results.

This online resource offers a comprehensive and regularly updated library of technical product information, test certifications and resources, tailored to the needs of fire safety glass professionals. With its modern and intuitive interface, the TechLibrary allows users to quickly find the necessary information, saving valuable time at every stage of the specification process.

The Pyroguard TechLibrary offers advanced search capabilities, allowing users to filter results by country, application, glass type, dimensions and more, ensuring precision in the product selection process. Continuously updated, it provides access to the latest system approvals and compliance resources, so professionals can be confident they are working with the most current information.

www.pyroguard.eu/resources/techlibrary

JJ212

The STA bolsters Volume Pattern Book with update

The Structural Timber Association (STA) has released the latest update to the STA Volume 1 Pattern Book: Structural timber buildings fire safety in use, which provides information on the performance of different structural timber elements.

The publication, which has been peer reviewed by experts at BRE Global, demonstrates the fire resistance performance of a range of timber frame wall and engineered timber floor constructions used commonly in the UK. By streamlining the process of demonstrating compliance for designers, manufacturers and regulators, the STA provides simple, clear instructions on what component parts within each construction element can be changed.

The latest update to the STA Volume 1 Pattern Book includes two new wall elements, minor clarifications to previously existing wall and floor elements and generic roof spandrel elements, and several clarifications aimed at making the document easier to use. The STA and its members have continued to invest in the content of the Pattern Book since it was first published in 2020 and, not surprisingly, it is one of the most popular downloads from the association's website.

Paul Newman, Technical Director at the STA said: "The Volume 1 Pattern Book is one of our most important publications; recognised and accepted by Building Control Bodies as an authoritative source of information, and we remain committed to maintaining and developing its content to ensure rigorous safety design principles are always upheld."

The latest update to the STA Volume 1 Pattern Book is available at **www.timefortimber.org**

beyond waterproofing:
the role of PMMA in sustainable design

***Wayne Chissell**, Technical Director at WestWood, explains how PMMA liquid-applied membranes contribute to more sustainable new builds and refurbishments...*

As the demand for sustainable and energy-efficient buildings grows, the impact of roofing materials has become a crucial consideration. The products used in a roofing system can significantly affect energy efficiency, carbon emissions, waste, and a property's lifespan.

As a key element in roofing design, the waterproofing layer plays a vital role in enhancing sustainability with cold-applied PMMA (Polymethyl Methacrylate) liquid-applied membranes offering several environmental advantages.

Cooler roofs

Incorporating solar reflective materials on the roof is an effective way to make a building more sustainable. By reflecting sunlight and reducing heat absorption, these materials improve energy efficiency, enhance indoor comfort and mitigate the urban heat island effect. Reduced heat exposure decreases thermal stress too, helping to extend the roof's lifespan.

Available in a range of light colours, including white, beige and pale grey, PMMA liquid-applied membranes can achieve a solar reflectance of between 0.60-0.85 and Solar Reflective Index (SRI) values above 80.

Solar reflectance is measured on a scale from 0 to 1, and the SRI is calculated by combining reflectivity and thermal emittance – the higher the value, the cooler the surface.

Advances in technology have also introduced a PMMA-based seal coat with a solar reflectance of 0.94 and an exceptionally high SRI of 114, which can significantly lower roof temperatures by up to 20°C.

Lower carbon emissions

PMMA-based systems are solvent free and cold applied, eliminating the need for hot works. This significantly reduces carbon emissions during installation while enhancing site safety.

Bituminous waterproofing membranes that require heat to install often use torches fuelled by Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG). However, based on data from the US Energy Information Administration, burning just one kilogram of LPG releases, on average, approximately 2.98kg of CO_2 into the atmosphere. As circa 47kg of LPG are required to install 150m^2 of bituminous membrane, the emissions are substantial, even on smaller roofs.

A cold-applied PMMA waterproofing system requires no LPG-fuelled equipment. The waterproofing layer is applied 'wet-on-wet' with a polyester reinforcement fleece, bonding seamlessly to the substrate. Once cured, within approximately 25-30 minutes, the surface layer is installed onto the waterproofing to form a single, uniform membrane.

Continued on page 26...

PROJECT OAK CASE STUDY

Fassa augment listed building with its thermal render solution

Fassa Bortolo, the forefront Italian render manufacturer, has recently provided its expertise to the completion of Project Oak, the new four-storey global headquarters for Spirax Sarco Engineering in Cheltenham.

Tasked with augmenting the existing listed building, Charlton House, which has served as the headquarters for over eight decades, Fassa Bortolo undertook the construction of a curved extension to complement the historic structure. This innovative addition boasts 180 workstations, a gym, and an auditorium, embodying modern functionality within a heritage context.

For the external rendering, Fassa Bortolo deployed its state-of-the-art Fassatherm system, specifically the Fassatherm Frame Plus system, certified by Kiwa BDA. This system, renowned for its efficiency, utilises A 96 adhesive along with mineral wool insulation, ensuring both thermal performance and structural integrity.

- **Fassatherm Frame Plus system, certified by Kiwa BDA**
- **Utilises A 96 adhesive along with mineral wool insulation**
- **RX 561 acrylic-siloxane top coat**

The finishing coat, was the application of RX 561 acrylic-siloxane top coat. This not only ensures a flawless finish, but also provides essential protection against environmental elements.

Designed by Roberts Limbrick, the project's architectural finesse is paralleled by its commitment to sustainability, achieving an esteemed BREEAM 'Outstanding' accreditation, a testament to its positioning among the top 0.5% of sustainable new builds worldwide.

A 96	FX 526	RX 561

TO FIND OUT MORE about Fassa Bortolo and its range of render systems and building products. Visit **www.fassabortolo.co.uk** or call **01684 218 305**

JJ7

FASSA BORTOLO

Cold-applied PMMA systems are also low in volatile organic compounds (VOCs), further reducing their environmental impact compared to solvent-based alternatives.

Built to last

PMMA's chemical structure is free from plasticisers and provides a high tensile strength and elasticity. These characteristics ensure the membrane can withstand structural and thermal movements and is highly resistant to UV radiation, making it highly durable.

When installed correctly by an approved contractor, the PMMA build-up can be guaranteed for up to 25 years, reducing the need for any repairs and the associated waste, transport journeys and carbon emissions. If a PMMA-liquid applied membrane does get damaged or reaches the end of its design life, it can be overlaid rather than replaced entirely.

Maximising green credentials

For specifiers seeking to enhance sustainability through a green or blue roof design, PMMA is compatible with both.

When tested and certified in accordance with FLL guidelines, the membrane will be root resistant and have the durability to cope with the planting's load bearing requirement as well as any post-build settlement.

PMMA's high tensile strength and flexibility also means it is suitable for blue roof construction, with the liquid application making it ideal for projects with extensive detailing.

If solar panels feature as part of the roof design, PMMA can be used successfully with ballasted or mechanically fixed PV systems. The membrane forms a monolithic, fully-bonded waterproofing layer, reducing the risk of any water ingress around the joints and fixings. Its resistance to UV and extreme temperatures also means it won't degrade.

Specification considerations

To make sure a liquid technology performs as expected, it is vital to check for third-party accreditations such as a British Board of Agrément (BBA) certificate. To achieve an agrément certificate, products and systems must pass a series of comprehensive assessments, which verify the product performs in line with the parameters given by the manufacturer.

Importantly, the certificate will list different factors that demonstrate compliance with UK Building Regulations. For liquid waterproofing products, these include weathertightness, fire related properties, adhesion, resistance to foot traffic, and durability.

A forward-thinking choice

By specifying PMMA, architects and contractors can help to enhance the performance of a roof while reducing environmental impact. The membrane's durability, cold-applied installation, and ability to reduce heat absorption play a key role in enhancing energy efficiency, reducing CO_2 emissions, and supporting sustainable building practices.

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JJ8

JJ218

Euroform's WeatherClad meets brief for Ilfracombe homes

Euroform's WeatherClad wood effect shiplap planks have been selected for Devonshire Homes' new Ilfracombe development, Mariner's Haven. Euroform is supplying the low maintenance, fibre cement planks, which are manufactured according to BS EN 12467: 2012+A2:2018 and have BDA Agrément certification, in six bespoke colours.

Devonshire Homes has designed the Mariner's Haven homes in sympathy with the landscape. A number of the house types will feature half shiplaped exteriors to reflect the character of the development's coastal location in an elevated position overlooking Ilfracombe.

Performance and look were key criteria for product selection for Devonshire Homes. Initially, Euroform provided samples of eight bespoke colours from which the housebuilder chose six to depict sand, grass, sea and sky. WeatherClad is also available in 21 standard colours, plus RAL and NCS colours on request, and Euroform provides a comprehensive range of colour matched profiles and trims.

The natural timber effect of WeatherClad, with its random embossed grain, and the width of the board will both add to the pleasing look. WeatherClad boards are 230mm wide, wider than most similar boards on the market.

WeatherClad carries third party BDA Agrément certification from KIWA, a certification recognised by architects, specifiers, engineers and building control personnel. Certification confirms the product's suitability and fitness for purpose in terms of performance and durability. WeatherClad has a European Classification of A2-s1,d0 for Reaction to Fire in accordance with BS EN 13501-1.

Weatherclad is part of the range of Euroform's Code for Construction Product Information (CCPI) assessed products.

Angus Cook of Devonshire Homes commented: "One of our top priorities is to ensure properties are sympathetic to the local environment. This is why we chose Euroform's WeatherClad as the colours complimented the countryside and ocean scenery surrounding Mariner's Haven. We always use high-quality products that will stand the test of time, and WeatherClad promises to do just that with its strong durability and water vapour resistance." WeatherClad can be purchased from Euroform in split pallets, helping customers to avoid waste.

www.euroform.co.uk

JJ219

Luxury hotel upgrades clubhouse with natural insulation materials

Natural building materials from **Ecological Building Systems** have been specified for the refurbishment of the clubhouse at the historic five-star Matfen Hall hotel, golf club and spa in Northumberland.

Gutex Multitherm woodfibre from Ecological Building Systems was specified for insulating the roof and walls of the clubhouse. The project involved constructing a new Cross Laminated Timber (CLT) extension in addition to refurbishing the existing timber frame clubhouse.

Gutex Multitherm is a breathable insulated sarking board made from recycled wood chips. It is windproof and waterproof and is widely used externally on timber frame and CLT walls and roofs. Renowned for reducing thermal bridging, it has excellent acoustic reduction properties and is carbon negative (better than zero carbon) due to the absorbed carbon in the wood chips being greater than the carbon emissions of manufacturing.

Pro Clima Adhero 3000 peel and stick membrane was specified for the refurbished clubhouse to protect the CLT panels from rain induced staining during the construction phase of the project, whilst also providing permanent airtightness. In addition, Pro Clima's Solitex Plus windtight membrane was chosen for the roof to ensure weather protection and breathability.

www.ecologicalbuildingsystems.com

JJ220

A new trade body uniting the UK's leading manufacturers and suppliers of bitumen flat roofing
bfra
the Bitumen Flat Roofing Association

Mapei announces launch of BFRA

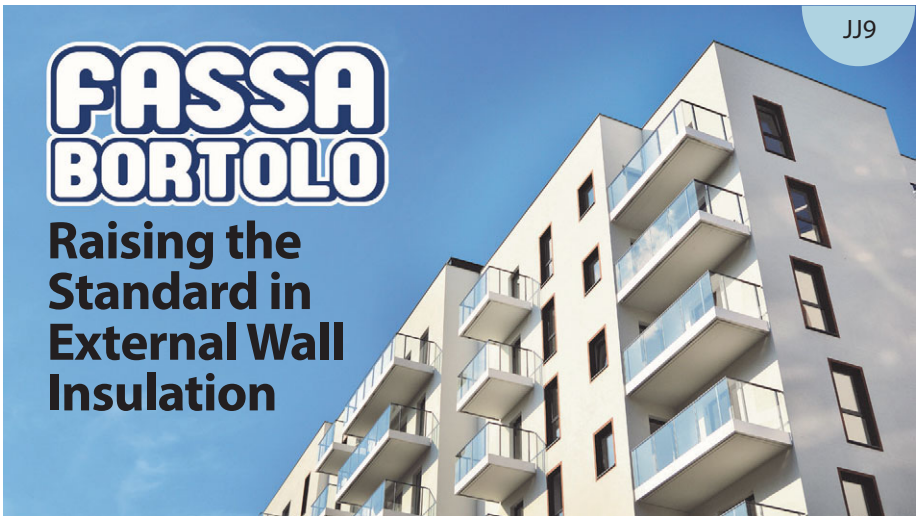
Mapei is delighted to announce that it is a proud founding member of the new Bitumen Flat Roofing Association (BFRA). Uniting the industry's manufacturers and suppliers, the BFRA will be a unified voice for the sector, championing professional excellence, technical competence and shaping the industry's future through lasting collaborative partnerships.

Recognising a significant opportunity to advance collaboration, improve stakeholder competency and promote best practice, 14 leading manufacturers and suppliers – including Mapei – came together earlier this year to establish the BFRA.

The association will support the interests of all those involved in the manufacture, design, specification, supply and installation of bitumen flat roofing systems.

Despite being in its infancy, the association has already established a technical working group to tackle the critical issues and challenges impacting the industry, such as British Standard updates to BS 8217 and BS 8747, in addition to the development of a comprehensive bitumen flat roofing technical guide.

www.bfra.co.uk www.mapei.co.uk



As the construction industry pushes towards greater energy efficiency and sustainable building practices, the **Fassa Bortolo** External Wall Insulation (EWI) System, also known as FassaTherm, has emerged as a trusted solution for both residential and commercial developments. Renowned for its technical performance and Italian craftsmanship, FassaTherm provides an intelligent approach to thermal insulation, reducing heat loss, cutting energy costs, and improving the overall environmental footprint of buildings.

At the heart of the system lies a combination of high-performance insulation boards, adhesive mortars, reinforcing meshes, and breathable decorative finishes, each element working in harmony to deliver long-lasting protection and aesthetic appeal. The system is compatible with a variety of insulation materials, including EPS and mineral wool, making it adaptable to specific project requirements and regulatory standards.

Beyond thermal benefits, the FassaTherm system is designed to enhance the exterior durability of structures, protecting against weather damage, moisture ingress, and thermal bridging. The comprehensive product range is backed by extensive technical support and certification, ensuring peace of mind for architects, specifiers, and contractors alike.

Aesthetically, Fassa's EWI system doesn't compromise. Every system integrates seamlessly with a wide array of finishes. From traditional renders to contemporary textures and colours – enabling creative freedom while maintaining high performance.

In a sector increasingly defined by building efficiency targets and low-carbon goals, FassaTherm stands out as a forward-thinking solution. Whether for new builds or refurbishment projects, it embodies the future of façade insulation—combining sustainability, performance, and design flexibility into one proven system.

As demand grows for energy-efficient building envelopes, Fassa Bortolo remains a name synonymous with innovation and quality in external wall insulation.

www.fassabortolo.co.uk/en
info.fassauk@fassabortolo.com

FP McCann Thin Flat Roof Tiles installed on North Ayrshire Care Home

FP McCann has supplied its thin leading edge interlocking concrete roof tiles branded "Thin Flat" to a brand-new care facility in Largs, North Ayrshire. Once complete early next year, the new 80-bed care home will provide accommodation for its elderly residents over three levels. Amongst its many state-of-the art facilities will be activity rooms and dining areas, a café, a gym and a cinema.

The former Warren Park Nursing Home was demolished in 2022 in advance of the new building work being undertaken by Northern Ireland based construction group Corramore on behalf of client the Care Concern Group.

To complement the surrounding properties, many of which have slate tiled roofs, a colour-matched FP McCann concrete roof tile has been installed, significantly saving on cost, with nearly 16,000 tiles together with 360 ridge tiles required to complete the roof. The FP McCann Thin Flat Black roof and ridge tiles have been supplied from the company's new ultra-modern £30m tile factory in Cadeby near Nuneaton, Warwickshire. This modern looking low-profile tile also available in Anthracite, Grey, Terracotta and Brown, features a smooth non-textured finish and straight cut edge.

Commenting on the Thin Flat tile installation, Sean Osborne procurement panager for Corramore says: "The low-profile black concrete tiles have given the roof on the new building a distinctive slate-like appearance as to the architect's specification. The durable tiles were easy to fix with minimum breakage recorded. We will certainly consider using FP McCann roof tile range on future construction projects".

Further expansion at the fully automated Cadeby factory will shortly mean the introduction of additional tile profiles. All FP McCann concrete roof tiles and accessories are of the highest standard and are covered by a 15 year Guarantee.

For sales quotations, email roofing plans to **roofing@fpmccann.co.uk**

kitchen *collaborations*

***Tim Spann,** Keller's UK National Sales Manager, discusses what the housebuilder should look for in a kitchen partner...*

The UK contract kitchen market is both diverse and crowded. The choice of suppliers is huge, so finding the right one to suit a housebuilder's needs can be challenging. With no room for trial and error, the pressure is on to choose the right one. Here we examine the boxes to tick in finding the best kitchen partner. After all, the kitchen is the heart of the home. Whilst many factors come into play, the five key factors must be:

Experience, expertise and critical mass

Experience of supplying kitchens in the volumes required is absolutely essential. Many manufacturers aspire to have a presence in the contract channel but, as a developer/builder, you don't want their growing pains while they wind up to your needs. The quality kitchen segments of the market, largely dominated by continental suppliers, operate on just-in-time manufacture practices. So, process, planning and timing are vital for frictionless solutions and perpetual supply. How many kitchens does the manufacturer produce each week? Do they have spare capacity for your needs? Are they experienced in producing contract kitchens and do they understand the complex needs and processes required. With the best services possible, there will be the need for remedial items. What does that process look like with your potential supplier? What systems do they employ? There is no substitute for track record and relevant experience; a good supplier will have all the answers.

Quality assurance

Poor quality control is extremely costly and the contractor needs to ensure that the supplier is working to the highest standards possible; industry standards and your standards. Pertinent industry quality standards are widely documented; and European and British ones are fundamentally the same. Effective quality management procedures are essential in achieving efficiency and reliability in the supply chain. Length and detail of warranty should be examined to ensure expectations are met.

Range, scope and agility

A broad range of products can be helpful in providing solutions and kitchen zeitgeist. Meeting style expectations can be

achieved with different materials and methods; how flexible is the manufacturer? Levels of flexibility can be extremely useful in challenge solving. The agility of the right supplier will help deliver fresh thinking and better outcomes. Differentiation and variation from the norms can help set your offer apart.

Price and added value

Value for money is more pertinent than price and price alone. If a manufacturer is killing themselves on price, that is not a sustainable model which makes your supply chain fragile. A break in supply chain can be catastrophic. Continuity is absolutely vital. Being more open on budgets can help a developer achieve goals and objectives more easily. Trust and true partnership play a big part in being more open, but open is usually healthier for all concerned. A strong supplier relationship adds value to any proposition, giving confidence for all concerned.

Sustainability

True sustainability, without all the greenwashing that abounds, has to be a factor in choosing a kitchen supplier. True sustainability will contribute to reducing your overall environmental footprint whilst providing broader advantages that will be financially beneficial, health improving and help protect priceless natural resources. Sustainability goes far deeper than planting trees. Examine the detail in the steps taken to become more sustainable and reap the rewards the right choices will deliver.

Remember, good kitchen solutions don't need to cost the earth.

Schlüter-Systems guarantees peace of mind with complete system

Recent technical guidance (9.2/06) from the NHBC emphasises the importance of maintaining the structural integrity of a building through effective waterproofing. Even prior to this, at the forefront of Schlüter's product innovations has always been ensuring that bathrooms, wetrooms and steam rooms can be properly waterproofed. In 1987, Schlüter-Systems introduced the high performance Schlüter-KERDI membrane, developed for bonded waterproofing assemblies with ceramic tile and natural stone coverings. Schlüter-KERDI is a crack-bridging waterproofing membrane of soft polyethylene with a special fleece fabric laminated on both sides for effective anchoring in the tile adhesive.

Fast-forward almost four decades from this innovation, and a range of complimentary products have been developed during that time to use in conjunction with the KERDI membrane, defining Schlüter-Systems as a dependable one-stop shop for everything needed to create a stylish and fully functioning wet environment. Such products from the KERDI range, including waterproofing sealing bands, pipe collars, prefabricated corner pieces, are all designed to make waterproofing a wet area a breeze, all whilst forming a complete system that leaves no gap exposed to the elements.

As an alternative to the waterproofing membrane, KERDI, which is designed to add waterproofing to an existing background, which is even, flat and load bearing, the BBA Agrément certified tile backerboard, KERDI-BOARD offers a solution as a prefabricated, waterproof substrate with multiple uses. From a fully waterproofed wall that can be directly tiled onto, or to create finishing touches such as a bench or shelving.

Integrated approach to installations

A key aspect to successfully waterproofing a bathroom or similar setting is for the various elements to be fully compatible to create a continuous line of defence or barrier against water penetration; the water should also be effectively removed from the area into the drainage system. In addition, the system must be straightforward to install and able to cope with any stresses resulting from routine usage or movement in the substrate. This holistic approach ensures that no weak points are left exposed, which could otherwise lead to costly water damage over time.

Accordingly, in developing the Schlüter-KERDI-LINE range of products, such as the Schlüter-KERDI-LINE-G3 drain, the company worked closely with architects to ensure the solutions met both technical requirements and aesthetic expectations and deliver the best outcomes for all concerned. The end result? A low height shower drain that can handle the complexities of different projects, making it an ideal choice for modern design environments where performance and appearance go hand in hand.

The Schlüter-KERDI-LINE-G3 is a horizontal linear stainless-steel drainage channel which can be installed with a preformed shower tray, screeded floor or suspended timber floor. Importantly, it too has been recognised with a BBA Agrément certificate, and complies with BS EN 1253, providing a 50mm water seal and anti-blockage protection based on the industry recognised 8mm ball bearing test. The drain is available in lengths from 500-1,200mm with central, offset, and dual outlets and is suitable for perimeter or intermediate installation. As is standard for Schlüter linear drains, it also comes

with a pre-adhered collar of Schlüter- KERDI membrane to allow for reliable connection to the bonded waterproof assembly.

While the G3 drain has an overall height of just 78mm, to facilitate a suitably shallow depth to the overall installation, the logical next step was to introduce a compatible low-profile shower tray, offering flush transition for level access. Therefore, in 2020 the Schlüter-KERDI-SHOWER-LTS range of shower trays was unveiled, featuring a preformed slope as a way of creating consistent falls on the floor of tiled showers. Together with the G3 drain, the ergonomically designed tray provides a low-height, simple solution. While its fall of 1 in 80 is significantly less than the 1 in 50 gradients typical of competitors, it is fully compliant with BS EN 5385.

The shower trays and drain, along with the rest of the Schlüter-KERDI range, have been developed to accept a full selection of natural stone finishes as well as conventional and large format floor tiles between 6-20mm thick. For added luxury, and to introduce comfort, as many high-end hotels or residential projects require, Schlüter-DITRA-HEAT-DUO provides surface heating for a warm underfoot feeling. DITRA-HEAT-DUO is multifaceted, providing uncoupling, sound insulation and a quicker heat-up response time, where the heat is transferred directly to the covering above due to the fleece backing.

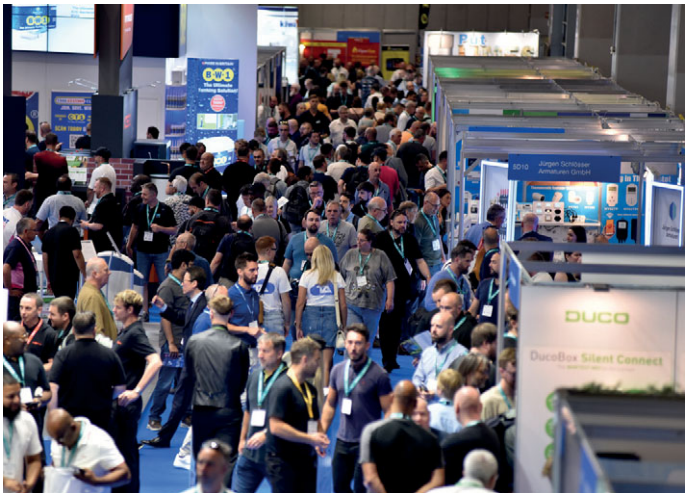
Schlüter-Systems has an unwavering dedication to ensuring high-performing bathrooms, wetrooms and steam rooms, with products such as the KERDI membrane and waterproofing components, and KERDI-LINE linear drains setting the standard. The full-system approach ensures compatibility and durability, with innovation paving the way for products that meet technical requirements and aesthetic appeal. Schlüter-Systems remains a trusted source for creating stylish and fully functioning wet environments while prioritising waterproofing and structural integrity.

For further information call 01530 813396 or visit www.schluter.co.uk

Retrofit 2025 at the Building Centre

Saniflo is delighted to announce a six-month collaboration with the Building Centre as a Principal Partner for 'Retrofit 2025 – What's Stopping Us'. As well as a static exhibition in the organisation's central London location, there is a full programme of in-person and online events for the duration of the campaign, which is designed to help navigate the barriers and opportunities in the retrofit sector of the built environment.

With plenty of experience in supporting change of use projects over many decades, Saniflo and sister brand, Kinedo, have not only placed products in the static display 'house without walls', but also contributed case studies detailing how their products have enabled change of use conversions in the housing and educational sector. Pods adjacent to the static display highlight how a former office building was transformed into apartments in Peterborough, using Kinedo shower cubicles in the bathrooms, whilst a former bank was converted into a world-class dental training school with the help of a number of Saniflo pumps and macerators.



Installer Kitchens & Bathrooms 2025: Driving innovation in the K&B sector

InstallerSHOW is the UK's must-visit event focusing on sustainability in the built environment, bringing together more than 800 exhibitors and 30,000 visitors across three halls and three days at the NEC Birmingham in June 2025.

In addition to the wealth of technologies and services on show, including a raft of new product launches, InstallerSHOW incorporates multiple live content areas which offer an informative and engaging timetable featuring a roster of compelling hosts and speakers.

The goal of the event is to ensure that every visitor's experience is both enjoyable and worthwhile – whether their priorities are to network with the supply chain, enhance their knowledge, get hands-on with new products, or meet up with their peers.

Installer Kitchens & Bathrooms

An event within an event, Installer Kitchens & Bathrooms takes place in Hall 4 of the NEC alongside InstallerBUILD and brings together manufacturers, retailers, designers, distributors, specifiers and installers to share their views and vision for a collaborative approach to the future of the sector.

Building on a successful debut at InstallerSHOW 2024, it offers a blend of technology, tools, innovation, and inspiration. Its aim is to bring the supply chain closer through education, knowledge sharing, and networking opportunities. Highlights include a packed content programme across theatres focusing on bathrooms, kitchens, and surfaces, covering topics such as water and energy efficiency, design innovation, sustainable and smart technology, best practice, and legislation.

What's in store for visitors to Installer Kitchens & Bathrooms this year?

Unrivalled access to the latest product solutions from top brands showcasing the latest advancements in kitchen and bathroom technology.

Explore CPD-accredited live sessions with expert insights, supported by leading industry associations including the BMA, BiKBBI, KBSA and more.

Visit the BiKBBI Village, sponsored by PJH, Sensio, Blum, Zenith and Alloy (Bushboard). The village will serve as an interactive hub where visitors can discover the latest innovations and product trends, as well as get advice and guidance.

Making its show debut, The HAUS is a full-scale, two-storey house built inside the show, fully kitted out with products and tech.Plus, there will be fantastic opportunities to connect and network with key decision-makers, including contractors, specifiers, housebuilders, and more from across the K&B sector.

A milestone celebration

2025 marks the 10th anniversary of InstallerSHOW. Since the first event in 2015, both exhibitor and visitor numbers have increased more than tenfold – all while retaining the sense of community and the festival feel of the show that have made it enduringly popular. To celebrate its 10th anniversary, there will be a number of special events and promotions throughout the three days, including a £10k giveaway for visitors.

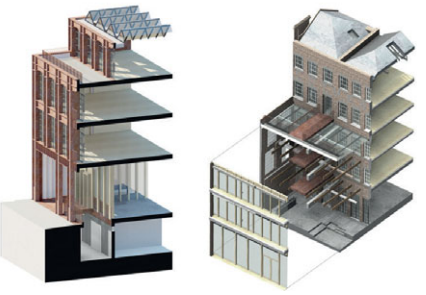
Tickets and parking for InstallerSHOW 2025 are free. Don't miss out, register for your free ticket today and join thousands of industry professionals at the NEC this June at ***www.installershow.com***

JJ230

DHF issues warning about External Panic and Emergency Exit Doorsets

Door & Hardware Federation (DHF) and GAI (the Guild of Architectural Ironmongers) have recently been informed by the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) that they are aware of cases where external panic or emergency exit doorsets have been supplied, conformity marked against EN 14351-1:2006+A2:2016, but without the necessary third-party certification. "There is concern that some economic operators may not be fully aware of the conformity marking requirements for these products, and we believe it is appropriate to issue a general reminder to the market," explained Michael Skelding, DHF's General Manager & Secretary.

How dated windows can achieve modern standards of energy performance



Together with building owners, most specifiers can see the aesthetic benefits of retaining traditional steel windows when restoring an older property, whether it is subject to conservation requirements or not: Universal Suite, W20 sections and other frame types generally suit everything from dockland warehouses to Art Deco villas. The slender sightlines and glazing patterns undoubtedly complement brickwork or render across multiple architectural styles, but the accepted wisdom that steel simply cannot satisfy the thermal performance requirements leads to many project teams seeking alternative solutions.

There is, though, genuine and growing cause for taking a more positive and proactive attitude to existing windows of any material, even if they are suffering from corrosion in the case of steel or rot in the case of timber, misalignment and have poorly maintained or even missing fittings.

Not only can they be fully refurbished and put in good working order, but their notorious draughtiness and the heat sapping thermal transmittance issues can be radically improved upon to the point where a number of restoration projects have successfully targeted the higher levels of BREEAM – without replacing the old windows. In fact, there are even points available within BREEAM assessments for saving the original fenestration from the scrap yard.

The ideal starting point is to have **ASWS**, an experienced window specialist, carry out a full condition survey prior to any work beginning on site with the likelihood of the drawings, observations and detailed recommendations often being incorporated as part of the tender documents – or even put forward to the conservation authorities as part of the planning or listed building application.

www.asws.co.uk

JJ231

JJ12

Not all pocket doors are the same: discover the ECLISSE advantage

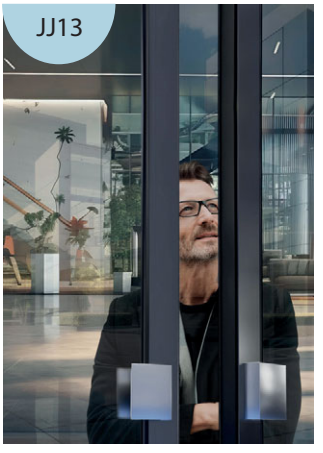
In the interior design sector, pocket doors are celebrated for their ability to save space and enhance aesthetic appeal. However, not all pocket doors are created equal. **ECLISSE** stands out in this competitive market by offering pocket door systems that combine innovation, quality, and style.

Unlike standard options, ECLISSE pocket doors are engineered for durability and smooth operation, ensuring long-lasting performance. Their systems are designed with user-friendliness in mind, featuring comprehensive installation guides and kits that simplify the process for both professionals and DIY enthusiasts. This ease of installation sets ECLISSE apart, making it a preferred choice for those seeking hassle-free solutions.

ECLISSE also offers a variety of styles which can be tailored to complement any décor. Whether you're aiming for a sleek, modern look or a classic, traditional feel, ECLISSE offers options that elevate your interior design. Ultimately, choosing ECLISSE means investing in a product that doesn't just save space but also enhances the overall living experience. For those who value quality and innovation in their home projects, ECLISSE pocket doors are the clear choice.

Explore more at **www.eclisse.co.uk** or call **0333 5770828**

JJ13



Reynaers' Vision 7 entrance door reaches 1 million milestone in durability test cycle

The Vision 7 Thermal Commercial Door from **Reynaers Aluminium** has now reached 1 million cycles (2 million open-close cycles) under ongoing performance testing, achieving the highest classification of mechanical durability.

The durability test cycle has been ongoing at Reynaers' testing centre in Belgium since August 2023. The aim of the testing is to give a genuine, qualified projection of durability when used in a high-traffic environment, such as a school, hospital or as an entrance door in a commercial building.

Vision 7 is a high-usage anti-finger trap thermal commercial door and framing system suitable for a range of ground-floor applications that has been developed specifically for the UK market. Reaching this milestone in mechanical durability testing means Vision 7 now meets the EN 12400 Class 8 rating, demonstrating high durability in the most frequent use environments.

After testing is complete the door must not show any sign of deformation or damage. Each level of testing ensures the correct standard of durability for the product's use, with the Class 8 rating developed to test doors for severe intensity usage, such as in public and commercial buildings.

www.reynaers.co.uk

buy once, buy well

Steel window and door manufacturer, ***Fabco*** *explains why the material is still the go-to for environmentally conscious customers...*

Unique, durable, sustainable, steel framed windows and doors are the latest fixation for homeowners and builders. Offering a sleek look that can effortlessly complement a wide range of styles whilst withstanding harsh weather conditions.

Windows are a crucial part of every building project, having a direct impact on both the energy performance and human comfort within the space, which is why it's important that they are selected carefully. Steel windows, although more expensive than their aluminium counterparts, are made with a welded construction method, resulting in a frame that is strong and stable whilst simultaneously slim and providing an unobstructed sightline. They can be galvanised to further increase overall durability and then either powder coated or painted to add a level of customisation. The material itself is strong and long lasting, able to withstand extreme temperatures and resist warping and cracking.

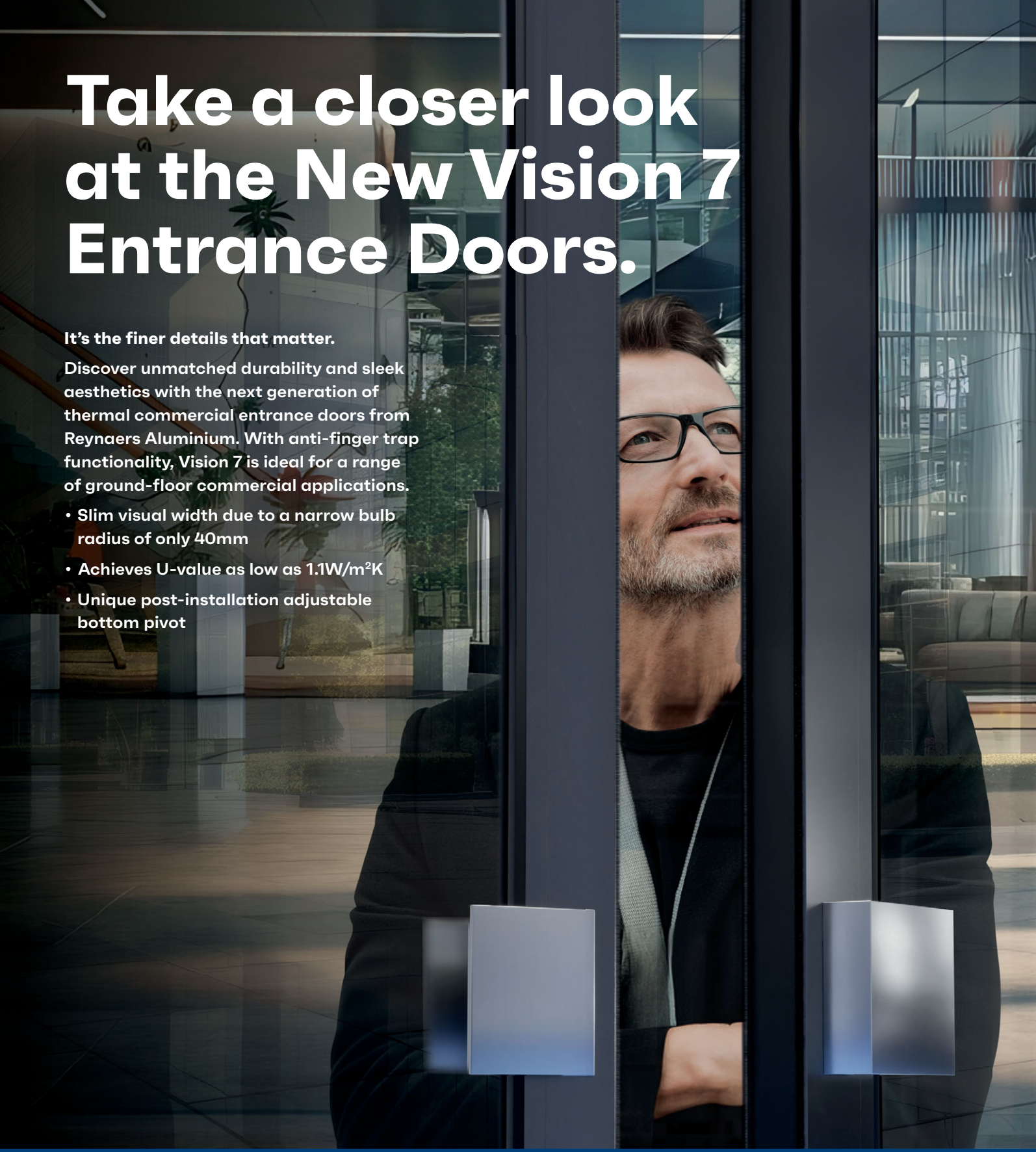
Visually, steel windows are unrivalled, the strength of the material allows for extremely thin sightlines, ensuring that the largest amount of natural light can flood into the room uninterrupted. They are also equipped with an appealing glazing effect and provide an unrivalled view of the outside. They offer a diverse system that allows for a truly bespoke design that can adapt to and elevate any space.

Aesthetically, steel windows and doors possess the unique ability to blend with both modern and period housing. With the first metal windows being made from wrought iron by medieval blacksmiths, the history of metal windows is extensive, mild steel came into effect in the second half of the 19th century and became an icon of modernist architecture in the aftermath of the first world war. Possessing both historical and modern aspects, steel windows suit a whole host of homes, making them ideal for projects spanning from restoration to new build.

With regards to energy usage, steel windows and doors are highly efficient, they reduce the amount of heat lost through the window and aid in helping buildings regulate their temperature and ensure that they spend less on electricity.

Steel windows incorporate cutting edge welding techniques which are executed with precision, once the frame has been fully assembled it goes through the galvanization process, where it is

Continued on page 38...



Take a closer look at the New Vision 7 Entrance Doors.

It's the finer details that matter.

Discover unmatched durability and sleek aesthetics with the next generation of thermal commercial entrance doors from Reynaers Aluminium. With anti-finger trap functionality, Vision 7 is ideal for a range of ground-floor commercial applications.

- Slim visual width due to a narrow bulb radius of only 40mm
- Achieves U-value as low as 1.1W/m²K
- Unique post-installation adjustable bottom pivot

JJ14

Reynaers Aluminium

Reynaers *Act*

We are contributing to more sustainable buildings and developing circular products. Ensuring we reduce our ecological footprint while never forgetting we are a caring company.

With over 50 years of global product development, 7 testing centres worldwide, you can be reassured with Reynaers Aluminium.

Together for better

reynaers.co.uk/vision-7

Image: French and Tye

dipped into a molten zinc mix which ensures that the frame won't rust over time. The only regular maintenance that is required is regular cleaning to keep your windows spick and span.

From an eco-friendly standpoint, the ability of steel windows to capture heat helps reduce energy consumption. Steel windows are long lasting, and steel is a 100% recyclable material. Although the upfront cost is higher for steel windows and doors, their long-lasting nature makes the investment worthwhile as they will not need to be replaced as frequently as cheaper alternatives such as aluminium.

Steel windows and doors are also ideal for both interior and exterior use, internal steel doors provide a fresh feel to any property, allowing rooms to be separated without sacrificing natural light. Acoustic glazing is also an option to reduce sound transmission for noise sensitive areas.

The W20 series is the most popular and diverse steel framing system currently available, not only offering the thinnest possible sightlines but also the strength needed for multi-light and curtain wall assemblies. For traditional steel windows, the SMW series are the oldest steel window sections currently available. Used throughout the last century, the section is commonly associated as the classic steel window seen on 1,000's of buildings nationwide.

From durability to sustainability, steel windows and doors can elevate any space in any setting and will flood your home with natural light for years to come.

Steel with substance
– a modern take on enduring design

JJ15

Generations of architects and specifiers know that **Crittall Windows** has been a benchmark of British craftsmanship and architectural refinement for more than 175 years. Renowned for manufacturing steel windows and doors that combine elegance with durability, the company has earned its reputation by consistently delivering products that are visually striking and functionally robust.

Today, an ambitious drive for innovation extends this rich tradition. Crittall's design and engineering teams remain committed to developing products that meet the demands of modern architecture while preserving the iconic aesthetic the brand is known for. This commitment is clearly reflected in the firm's Corporate W20 TE and the T60 systems. Both systems offer exceptional thermal performance that meets the needs of energy-efficient design without compromising on style.

The Corporate W20 TE system is a patent-pending evolution of Crittall's celebrated W20 profile. It has been designed to answer the growing demand for energy efficiency in both residential and commercial architecture. Achieving impressive U-values of just 1.4 W/m^{2}K, the system complies with Approved Document L and offers a genuine solution for projects where high performance must be balanced with design integrity.

Instead of adopting conventional thermal break technology, Crittall has adapted its trusted steel profile to create a thermal gradient across the section, equivalent to that of a thermally broken steel section. This clever engineering preserves the structural integrity and slim sightlines that define traditional steel windows while significantly improving insulation. Dual weather seals enhance weathertightness and ensure consistent internal comfort throughout the seasons.

Manufactured from 100% recycled steel and built to last more than 60 years, Corporate W20 TE is a sustainable choice that does not compromise on durability or appearance. Available in any RAL, BS or bespoke colour, including textured and metallic finishes, this system offers the flexibility to suit a wide range of architectural styles and project requirements. Its elegant design remains true to the heritage of Crittall windows, while the incorporation of modern performance elements ensures that it continues to meet the stringent requirements of today's building standards.

The T60 system represents the next generation of thermal innovation in steel glazing. Designed with advanced thermal barrier technology, T60 achieves U-values as low as 0.8 W/m^{2}K, placing it among the most energy-efficient steel systems available today. Finished with an architectural grade polyester powder coating and featuring fully welded frames, T60 windows are built to withstand the test of time. Offering optional multipoint locking systems, double weatherstripping and enhanced acoustic insulation, T60 provides a secure, comfortable and quiet interior environment. Particularly well suited to high-end residential developments and sensitive heritage refurbishments, T60 is an ideal solution where replacing original steel windows is necessary without compromising the building's character.

Crittall's commitment to innovation extends beyond its in-house product range. The company is investing in new products sourced from Secco Sistemi, an Italian design-led manufacturer of high-end steel windows and doors. While full details of the collaboration will be announced in due course, this strategic move reinforces Crittall's intent to expand its product offering and consolidate its position in the premium market segment. In partnership with BM Architectural, supplier of Secco systems into the United Kingdom, Crittall will bring these exclusive new ranges to market with the same care, precision and performance-led approach that has long defined the brand.

Whether specified for a period property, a contemporary new build or a commercial redevelopment, Crittall steel systems provide a timeless architectural solution. Architects and developers seeking products that combine traditional style with modern efficiency will find that Crittall delivers excellence, as ever.

For further information on Crittall Windows and to explore the full range of steel systems available, please visit www.crittall-windows.co.uk

Healthcare and fire safety: why prevention is better than the cure

Health and wellbeing is naturally high on the agenda in healthcare facilities, but what more can be done to ensure fire door safety is being met with competency and not complacency? ***Alex Airnes*** *of Allegion UK discusses...*

Healthcare environments are synonymous with caution, wellness and safety. Though, where National Health Service professionals work determinedly to meet the needs of their patients, equally as vital are the fire door safety procedures practiced throughout NHS premises.

Fire safety management plays a crucial role in all healthcare settings, where protecting staff, visitors and potentially vulnerable patients is a continuous effort. Even with a host of unique operational challenges, hospitals, for example, are often considered to be one of the safest public buildings.

Despite these perceptions, NHS data has previously reported a concerning rise in fire incidents across sites around the country. The inherently busy nature of healthcare settings and around-the-clock use of facilities containing vulnerable patients, medical equipment and even flammable materials, presents a complex set of fire safety issues that must be addressed. With that in mind, is there perhaps more work to be done to ensure fire door safety is approached professionally to further mitigate risk?

Health and fire door safety

In the three months ending January 2025, an average of 46,000 people visited major hospital A&E departments each day in England, with a further 27,300 visitors attending minor A&E facilities every day. Fire doors play a vital role in protecting each of those individuals, but when paired with the fast-flowing traffic often found in healthcare facilities, this sustained level of footfall can create relentless environments that are unforgiving on fire doors and their hardware.

As a critical element of passive fire protection, fire doors are designed to compartmentalise fire and smoke for a specified period of time. Where fire could spread quickly across the interconnected sections of healthcare estates, fire doors will form protective barriers for a minimum of 30 minutes (FD30) or 60 minutes (FD60), allowing occupants to escape and preventing potentially life threatening smoke inhalation in the process. Fire doors can only operate effectively when working in tandem with their hardware components, such as hinges, seals and fire door closers. Yet, all too often in healthcare settings, fire doors and their hardware become damaged and fall victim to improper maintenance and use, with some self-closing doors even propped open to improve the flow of traffic and ease of access for beds, wheelchairs and medical trolleys. In turn, this leaves closers disengaged and renders doorsets useless in the event of a fire.

Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, healthcare management teams are given a direct responsibility to ensure employees and patients are safe within their premises. With this, NHS trusts must nominate a 'responsible person', which is often an individual who possesses a legal responsibility to demonstrate effective fire safety procedures, undertake risk assessments and meet fire safety compliance. In demanding healthcare environments, regular fire door inspections are key, and as part of their duties, a designated responsible person must have a firm understanding of fire door checks and maintenance, whilst also raising staff awareness on the importance of fire door safety. For this, ongoing education is key

Prevent and protect

In order to retain the integrity of a fire door and its components, healthcare estates must consider how accurate specification, professional installation and ongoing maintenance can help to reduce common hazards and the possibility of danger before it surfaces.

Routine fire door checks can save lives and should form the agenda of anyone responsible for fire safety management. They consist of reviewing the specification, installation, condition and certification of the door furniture, the hinges, the locks and latches, door closers, hold open devices, signage, exit devices, door seals and the gaps around the door (3mm is recommended for fire doors).

When performing a closing action, a fire door calls upon each of these components and as such, not one element can fail in the event of a fire. To meet the necessary standards, the complete fire doorset must pass a series of standardised tests in the form of UKCA and CE certifications, which healthcare officials can identify – alongside a fire door's FD ratings – by reviewing the label, usually found on the top edge of the door.

Correct specification is essential to long-term performance too. For high-use areas in large hospitals, for example, electromagnetic hold-open devices are a more appropriate choice and allow fire doors to close once a fire alarm is activated, automatically releasing the door in a safe and controlled manner. In smaller, slower-paced settings, cam-action closers with slide arms can fulfil fire door regulations whilst providing ease of operation and accessibility for vulnerable users who may otherwise struggle with heavy doors.

Regardless of size, layout and the building's needs, all healthcare facilities must look to inherit a regular maintenance plan for their fire doors and emergency exit routes. In doing so, teams can highlight any early signs that a fire door is not performing as it's required to, which can help prevent irreparable damage.

JJ16

Bradite transformation makes store exterior best on the market

Thanks to the innovative use of **Bradite's** One Can at a local estate agents' property, a Manchester firm of decorators have labelled One Can their 'go-to exterior paint'.

Heritage Decorators was engaged by Empire Joinery to paint a new shopfront for local estate agents 'Ashworth Holme' in the town centre of Sale, Cheshire.

The prominent building, dating from 1921, was refurbished with the replacement of deteriorated signage, windows and entranceway. The client requested a traditional shop frontage that would complement the building's architectural style.

"Originally", explains Heritage Decorators' Oliver Brigham-Bowes, "we specified the job with an old-school approach in mind, using traditional methods of aluminium primer and oil-based primers/undercoats and oil-based external topcoats."

But the spec changed after a trip to a decorators' merchants in Altrincham, and a discussion about potential weather problems using oil-based products as winter came closer, due to their slow drying times. They concluded that a water-based product that offers a speedy drying time without compromising on durability would be highly preferable.

"They recommended Bradite One Can due to its high adhesion, tannin blocking capability and multiple finish and colour options", says Oliver. Bradite One Can is touch dry in 30 minutes, with recoats possible after 1 hour, making it ideal for exterior painting projects.

He admits: "I have always been dubious to use a paint that says it does everything but, even after our first coat, I could tell that there was something different about the science behind this all-in-one product. Not only did it key to bare and pre-painted timber, cover extremely well and dry quickly, but it left a finish that the customer was overjoyed with."

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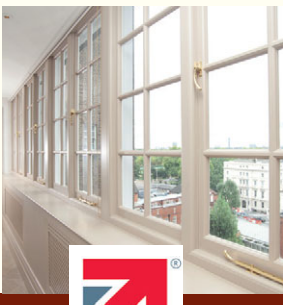

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MADE IN BRITAIN

JJ17

de-core: a guide to core styles in *2025*

The '-core' trend in interior design serves as a defining element for various style movements. Each core style is typically influenced by a specific aesthetic era, theme, or concept. These styles not only provide a narrative for design choice but also a guide towards achieving a cohesive look.
In the digital age, core styles help consumers discover inspiration, source products, and better understand personal interior preferences. ***ABC&D*** *takes a look at how familiar cores will be making an impact in 2025 homes...*

Contemporary Core

Scandi Core
Based on simplicity, functionality and a need to connect with nature, this popular style continues to evolve and has been at the heart of styles such as Japandi.

Future forecast: The ability to pair back to the barest essentials while still incorporating the fundamentals will appeal to those looking for a modern, crisp and clean update with all the comfort of Scandi core.

Cottage Core
This welcoming aesthetic draws on the fundamentals of country cottage and rural life. From incorporating craft, and traditional patterns such as ginghams and checks, to bright colours, Cottage Core remains a popular choice for those looking for comforting familiarity.

Coastal Core

Future forecast: Repurposing and upcycling remain a popular feature for those looking to make an impact on landfill or those looking for cost-effective accent pieces.

Coastal Core
Founded on recreating the calming and relaxing colour palettes and natural textures of coastal landscapes, Coastal Core offers a welcoming aesthetic that plays on a need to reminisce on beach and travel escapes.

Future forecast: While textures played an original foundation of this style, a move towards natural fibres will increase, with natural floors, accessories and finishes taking centre stage.

Gothic Core
More than just a dark colour scheme, Gothic Core draws from Gothic architecture, using rich, dark tones, ornate details, and luxurious fabrics to create a dramatic atmosphere.

Future forecast: Keep your eyes peeled for a rise in dark flooring. Rather than painting walls, ceilings and furniture with dark paint, floors can easily add impact with patterns or rich wood styles.

Contemporary Core
Contemporary Core is a more fluid movement that's constantly evolving but builds on the latest contemporary trends. At the heart of the look is a balance between simplicity, and functionality characterised by clean lines, cool tones and uncluttered minimalism.

Future forecast: Look out for light flooring trends that support a fresh and crisp colour palette.

Shabby Chic Core
Shabby Chic takes its roots from antique and vintage furnishings. This can be achieved by sourcing key features and accessories while keeping walls and floors a plain, supportive foundation.

Future forecast: Shabby Chic gets an elegant update with the addition of art-inspired pieces in the form of accessories. This can be a talking point such as this rug inspired by the iconic Bauhaus movement.

Shabby Chic Core

Cottage Core

Gothic Core

Scandi Core

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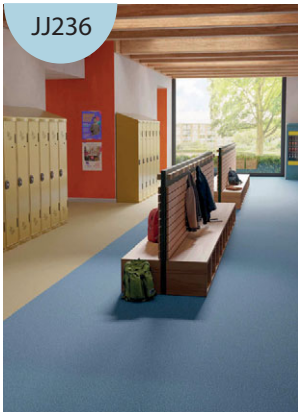
JJ236



A Heavy duty star from IVC Commercial

Designed and made in Europe to excel in high traffic, heavy duty locations, Adriatico 70 is the latest compact vinyl floor from **IVC Commercial**. Available in a design inspired by a classic homogeneous vinyl look, the floor features 3D chips of coloured vinyl. It comes in six workman-like colours suited to general use in education, public areas and more. As part of IVC Commercial's 70 series, Adriatico 70 uses a 0.70mm wear layer with Invertech protection. This guarantees a floor that withstands intense foot traffic, stands up to scuffs and scratches and stays easy to clean – Adriatico 70 is class 34/42 in accordance with EN ISO 10874. Available in 2 and 4m widths, Adriatico 70 achieves R10 slip-resistance and has a seven-year warranty for commercial use.

JJ237

Luxury vinyl flooring from the Belgian master

Unilin Flooring designs and makes luxury vinyl floors in Belgium under the Quick-Step and Moduleo brands. Proven in the commercial market, these floors are known for their innovation, quality and design integrity. Covering all popular specifications including dryback, loose lay and click engineered vinyl in plank, tile and herringbone formats, as well as the multi-shaped dryback floors of Moduleo Moods, Unilin Flooring can support project specifiers in achieving a luxury vinyl floor that will exceed design expectations and prove durable and easy to maintain in use. All Quick-Step and Moduleo floors are also certified for pre-consumer recycled content by third-party certification body SCS Global Services.

Forbo extends its sustainable Evolve+ carpet tile series with Tessera Twine

JJ238

2024 saw Forbo Flooring Systems introduce the Evolve+ series of carpet tiles, designed for enhanced sustainability. Now, the manufacturer has added a new product to this collection: Tessera Twine. A softly striated loop pile carpet tile, Tessera Twine meets extensive sustainability criteria, while offering a beautifully balanced aesthetic. Inspired by the organic elements of bark and leaves, the Tessera Twine collection offers a naturally inspired colour palette.

The soft organic linear flow of the range lends itself perfectly to office and education spaces, where carpet tiles are a popular specification choice. As part of the Evolve+ series, Tessera Twine delivers enhanced environmental credentials, manufactured using Thrive matter by Universal Fibers – a 100% solution dyed nylon 6, which contains 90% recycled content.

JJ239

Junckers floors for Passivhaus school

Mulberry Academy London Dock is a new secondary school and sixth form designed by Passivhaus specialist architects Architype. The school was built with an unbroken thermal envelope to provide an airtight construction with ultra-low energy consumption. As a result, there are substantial savings in running costs for the school and local authority, meaning funds can be directed toward vital educational requirements.

As well as low carbon and energy consumption, Passivhaus principles deliver excellent indoor quality to benefit the health and wellbeing of students and staff, known to have a significant effect on learning as well as happiness. As part of the scheme, **Junckers** solid hardwood flooring was installed in several areas of the school, including the Sport England-compliant sports hall. As well as providing a safe, high-performing, area elastic floor, Junckers' solid wood floors help maintain a healthy indoor climate. The pre-finished floors and the range of cleaning and woodcare products used to maintain the floor carry the Danish Indoor Climate label.

www.junckers.co.uk

New partnership strengthens sustainability offering

L-R: Mick Wells, owner of Wells Interiors and Todd Leverton, commercial manager of See Limited

JJ240

See Limited, a group holding company of businesses in the built environment sector, has partnered with luxury wallcovering install specialist, Wells Interiors, to further strengthen its sustainable product portfolio offering.

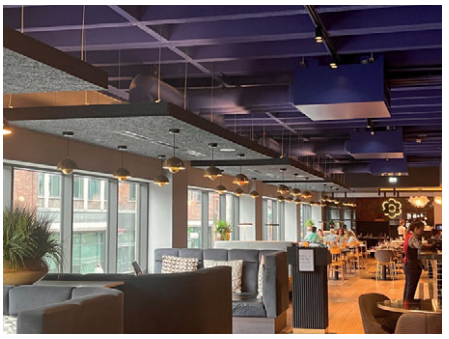
Targeting the UK's architect and design professionals, the collaboration on the supply and installation of premium wallcovering SanFoot Real Wood Veneer – a sustainable wood solution for architecturally inspired interiors – aims to offer more sustainable choices through material selection, as well as the supply and install of materials specified in UK interior projects.

See Limited has already supplied the premium wallcovering to a range of international interior design projects including Cathay Pacific's First-Class Lounge at London Heathrow Airport and Starbucks Reserve Roastery in Tokyo, Japan which are utilising the performance driven qualities of the material, such as being fire-retardant as standard, impact resistant in high-traffic areas and flexibility when applied to a range of surfaces including curved walls.

"The objective of our partnership is to increase the amount of UK projects that feature our real wood wallcovering, educating architects and interior designers about our economical and sustainable wood solution for direct to drywall applications for premium interior projects," commented Todd Leverton, commercial manager at See Limited.

info@see-limited.com www.see-limited.com

JJ18



Taking acoustics to new heights

Malmaison York is a stunning boutique hotel comprising 150 bedrooms, F&B venues, the brand's signature Work + Play meeting and event spaces, spa and gym. With interiors designed by Studio Moren and sited in the iconic former Aviva building in central York, the 1960s brutalist office building has been re-configured to create a bespoke venue befitting its unique location and heritage.

The redesign includes restoring eight floors of concrete floorplates as well as facades and walls. Two new bars and restaurants were incorporated into the scheme including the Sora Sky Bar with a large terrace overlooking York Minster.

With so many hard surfaces in the design, Studio Moren needed to find a solution to control acoustics within the spaces from the restaurants and decided to use **Troldtekt's** wood wool acoustic panels as part of the ceiling designs. Specified in an innovative two-tone design, the destination restaurant complements the wider 1960s inspiration and the brand's playful image.

Troldtekt's wood wool acoustic panels are frequently specified in schools, restaurants, leisure spaces and commercial properties where noise levels can be uncomfortably loud. Panels are available in a variety of different structures and colours, combining optimal sound absorption with an award-winning design. The Troldtekt range has a minimum expected life cycle of 50 years coupled with excellent resistance to humidity and tested to meet ball impact standards. The range is available in various sizes and structures, from extreme fine to fine. They can be supplied as natural wood, natural unpainted FUTURECEM offering a reduced carbon footprint and finished in almost any RAL or NCS colour.

Depending on the panel specified, reaction to fire is classed in accordance with EN 13501 as B-s1,d0 or A2-s1,d0 respectively. Cradle to Cradle Certified at Gold level, Troldtekt wood wool acoustic panels are manufactured using wood from certified forests (PEFC/09-31-030 and FSC C115450) and can contribute positively to a building's BREEAM, WELL or LEED points.

Samples, case studies and technical guidance are available from **www.troldtekt.co.uk**

JJ19

Marmox heads for InstallerSHOW 2025 with revamped wetroom range

Already recognised as a leader in the wetroom and shower market, **Marmox** will be unveiling a radically revamped range of products at this year's InstallerSHOW2025 at the NEC (24-26June) – offering wider benefits for installers and end users.

Visitors to Stand 4L26 will have the chance to view the easy to install and robust but attractive Multiboard Showerlay options which have been brought under the Multiboard family of wetroom products. They will feature a completely different type of centre drain, fitted with a choice of coloured grates – encompassing stainless steel, white and black – as well as having a fleeced layer across the top of the tray, with a 100mm wide surplus to be tanked in with the adjacent floor or wall membrane. All of the Showerlays are constructed of high-density polystyrene, extruded to the exact dimensions and fall to guarantee the correct flow into a new in-built drain, while the insulation is coated on both sides with fibreglass mesh embedded into Marmox's unique blend of cement polymer mortar.

While products like Minilay and various sizes of Showerlay are being discontinued, popular sizes such as 900 x 1,200mm and 1,000 x 1,000mm are being retained. Alongside these will sit various new sizes of Showerlay, in both centre and offset drain positions. Designed to be easily trimmable, offering countless size options. As well as the additional sizes and configurations of point drain Showerlays, a further selection of Linear Showerlay options will be available later in the year.

The Marketing Manager for Marmox, Grant Terry comments: "We are really excited about our new wetroom offering. We have listened carefully to what our customers are asking for and made changes accordingly. This has resulted in new Showerlay sizes being added to the range, a new drain and additional wetroom products being made available. We manufacture Marmox Multiboards to a very high standard, offering total peace of mind for tilers, plasterers and homeowners."

Also new to the Multiboard range will be two stylish, tileable, vanity basins which are wall mountable and supported by solid bars running through them. There will be a choice of either a point trap or a linear trap. Furthermore, a tileable floating shelf, designed to support a more traditional basin sink, or simply towels, is also being added to the range.

sales@marmox.co.uk
www.marmox.co.uk

JJ241

Dulux champions the design talent of tomorrow

Dulux is proud to announce its support for the visionary GREEN GRADS initiative, a unique UK platform dedicated to promoting the next generation of sustainably focused talent in design, art and engineering. With shared goals to foster innovation and champion sustainability, this collaboration will pave the way for sustainable advancements within the design industry.

Dulux is committed to transforming the way people paint by prioritising sustainability in everything it does. From the formulation of ultra-low VOC free, air improving and water-based paints across both DIY and professional ranges to more sustainable packaging, greener transport and making recycling old paint practical and easy for everyone through the Community Repaint scheme. Dulux aims to make a positive difference to both the planet and people. For example, in the professional paint ranges Dulux Trade offers a range of products that are now 99.9% VOC free, including Dulux Trade Ultra Matt, Dulux Trade Supermatt and Dulux Trade Spraymatt, significantly improving indoor air quality.

Partnering with GREEN GRADS is a natural extension of Dulux's sustainability mission, empowering a new generation of designers who share its vision for a more sustainable future.

www.dulux.co.uk/en/sustainability

JJ242

Multi-award winner: Sedus wins numerous awards in 2025 for its modern furniture design

Now more than ever, excellent design means finding answers to the challenges of our time. Circular thinking, sustainable product development and design standards that emphasise enduring durability are just a few of the key features that make new products unique.

In 2025, this applies to four **Sedus** designs — the se:café wooden chair, se:hive, se:vision, and the se:lounge light shell chair — each of which has won both an iF Design Award and a Red Dot Award.

"Four products, each with two awards – a valuable confirmation of our design standards," says Ernst Holzapfel, Marketing Director at Sedus Stoll AG. "The award winners illustrate how smart material stewardship, ergonomic innovation and aesthetic flair combine to deliver versatile interior design concepts. Whether it's an elegant chair, a comfortable seating solution or a modular room-in-room structure, their design is characterised by relevance and diversity.

www.sedus.com/en

New TBA FIREFLY Fire Collar completes compartmentation capability for UK manufacturer

Rochdale based **TBA FIREFLY** has enhanced its reputation for supplying fire barrier systems able to accommodate both service penetrations and complex forms of structure by introducing a new range of four-hour fire collars, which will now enable the manufacturer to offer specifiers and specialist installers a single source of supply to address multiple compartmentation challenges.

The FIREFLY FCR Fire Collars feature the use of the in-house produced high-performance graphite which is housed in a corrosion resistant, powder coated steel sleeve: developed to deliver high volume expansion to exert a pressure seal on pipework penetrations. Not only will the range effectively close off vulnerable soil, waste and other types of pipe in the event of a fire, but the devices are fully tested in combination with FIREFLY's flexible barriers and wall or floor batts. The range covers six sizes from FCR50 up to FCR160 and offers compliance with BS EN1366 -3 2021, while the rapidly expanding graphite is able to hold back fire for a full 240 minutes.

The FCR50 – FCR160 Fire Collars are likely to be used in combination with the manufacturer's well proven and fully tested fire barriers, such as Titan Lite 120:60, which are installed to create fire walls rising to the underside of existing roof structures and within other vulnerable spaces, being installed using steel angles and ancillary products like fire resistant adhesive, staples and intumescent sealant. Such barriers can also feature FIREFLY Collaroll, Penowrap and the new FB180 Ablative Batts which can also be used within floor build-ups.

As a regular user of FIREFLY systems in both commercial and multiple-occupation residential properties, the Contracts Manager for Midlands based Krasi Fire Protection, Daniel Oldacre, commented: "We see this as a very positive move by FIREFLY in being able to offer its own brand of fire collar."

"It ticks all the boxes – being able to use the same manufacturer to supply a complete system which is fully tested. It looks better for the end client and we are starting to install the FCR Fire Collars now."

Manufactured from woven and non-woven glass, the FIREFLY range of flexible barriers is designed to optimise resistance to flame and smoke, as well as offer heat protection in a wide range of scenarios. The barriers are easy to install horizontally or vertically using a full selection of FIREFLY ancillary products in order to create a fully tested and certified system.

JJ20

A short "How to" video is available on the TBA FIREFLY You Tube channel:

www.youtube.com@tbafirefly

info@tba-pt.com
www.tbafirefly.com

the route to happier, cost-effective, all-weather homes *runs through quality design*

***The Heating Trades Network UK (HTNUK)** clears up some common misconceptions around heat pump installations and highlights key issues including better training, clearer government guidance and improved green finance schemes...*

As the UK accelerates efforts to reform housing, one truth is becoming clear: the pathway to cheaper energy bills, comfort, and decarbonisation runs directly through quality design of the homes themselves. Architects, developers, and builders hold the key to technical decision-making that can improve the daily experience of households across the country, be it retrofit or new builds – we need the case studies to demonstrate what good quality design looks like and the benefits it can bring to homes across the country.

This is particularly true when it comes to heating. The UK is home to the oldest and some of the most poorly insulated housing in Europe, while we pay more for energy than the US and Canada. Heat pumps could be the answer, and while the government is increasingly supporting adoption and uptake is increasing, the nation remains well short of its 2028 target of 600,000 installations.

National polling by the Heating Trades Network shows that consumer attitudes towards heat pumps are more cautious than sceptical. Most households support the idea of clean heating in principle – they are not ideologically opposed to heat pumps or technological advancement – the barrier, however, is affordability: households are concerned about high running costs, unexpected bills, and installation disruption.

These concerns are not insurmountable, but they must be factored into how heating systems are designed and delivered, especially in retrofit projects. Heating systems are no longer a purely technical specification. They are experienced by occupants on a day-to-day basis. That means every design decision carries both an engineering and behavioural dimension. A system may perform well on paper, but if it results in perceived cost volatility or discomfort, it risks undermining both public trust and project success.

To address this, more design teams are beginning to collaborate earlier and more closely with heating specialists.

Continued overleaf...

These professionals often bring overlooked technical insights that can help futureproof a development ensuring efficiency, reliability, and ease of use for the end user.

This shift is also driving interest in new financial models that reflect how consumers want to pay for energy. Subscription packages, energy-as-a-service offers, and 0% loans are gaining traction by making low-carbon heating more accessible and predictable. These aren't just attractive to households, they're a way for builders and architects to de-risk new systems by providing reassurance on lifetime value and operating costs.

Crucially, integrating consumer expectations into the design process is no longer optional. It's a mark of quality and foresight. We see growing demand from architecture and construction professionals for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) sessions on the future of heating design. Whether through shared heat networks in flats or the smart deployment of exhaust air heat pumps in retrofits, success increasingly hinges on integrated thinking.

We hold the keys to tackling not only decarbonisation, but also the cost-of-living crisis. This is not about prescribing a single technology or one-size-fits-all model. It is about broadening and embedding heating design within the wider ambitions of sustainable housing.

When we understand how people live with the systems we install, not just how those systems work; we design better homes. And in doing so, we create buildings that are fit for the future, whatever the weather.

When we understand how people live with the systems we install, not just how those systems work; we design better homes...

The Heating Trades Network UK is a group of installers, gas engineers, and small business owners, who have come together to provide the British public with reliable, unbiased advice on the future of home heating and cooling. As the experts in the network speak to people every day about their homes and heating, they know full well how important the need for clarity and consumer confidence is regarding heat pumps. With all the noise around heat pumps in the British media landscape, HTNUK is here to get the best results for consumers.

Vectaire at Silverstone

All sizes (EVO220, EVO250 and EVO350) of **Vectaire's** EVO horizontal, in-line MVHRs have been installed in the prestigious Escapade accommodation at Silverstone. The EVOs provide optimum ventilation by continuously and quietly supplying fresh air in areas up to 200m². They comply with the latest building regulations and all units have energy efficient EC motors, providing an effective, low energy, low running cost solution to controlling condensation and pollution. They are up to 88% heat exchange efficient and have low specific fan powers. Their sophisticated control unit gives options for summer-bypass, frost-stat, over-run timer on boost setting, variable adjustment for trickle and boost speeds, and humidity control. They are SAP PCDB Listed and are manufactured in the UK to ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015.

www.vectaire.co.uk

JJ246

New research to map and assess waste heat potential in cities

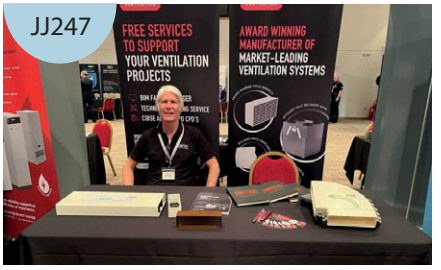
Cooling systems generate large amounts of waste heat, but most of that heat goes unused. A new research project led by **London South Bank University (LSBU)** aims to transform that by identifying and mapping waste heat from urban cooling applications, using Birmingham as a case study.

The Waste Heat Assessment and Resource Mapping (WHARM) project, funded by the EPSRC through the Reef-UKC network, will produce a georeferenced database on energy-intensive sectors such as data centres, supermarkets, cold storage facilities and industrial sites to better understand their waste heat generation and the potential for reuse on site or "export" to neighbours. EPSRC is a funding body for engineering and physical sciences research in the UK, supporting innovations that drive a sustainable and resilient economy. Reef-UKC is a research network focused on integrating renewable energy with clean cooling technologies, aiming to improve energy efficiency and reduce environmental impact through system-level research and sustainable business models. WHARM is a partnership between LSBU, Aston University, Birmingham City Council, Star Refrigeration, and Skilled Mapping.

Project objectives aim to: Identify, map and characterise waste heat from cooling systems in Birmingham; produce economic models to quantify the levelised costs of capturing and upgrading waste heat to different temperature levels; engage with stakeholders to identify challenges such as high costs, uncertainty over business models, and mismatch between heat supply and demand; and support local authorities and businesses in making informed decisions when assessing waste heat opportunities.

Dr Henrique Lagoeiro, Research Fellow at LSBU and project lead, said: "The WHARM project is a great initiative bringing together industry leaders and academics to provide a blueprint on how to approach waste heat with data, ultimately building knowledge that can support the decarbonisation of our cities and industries."

JJ247


FREE SERVICES TO SUPPORT YOUR VENTILATION PROJECTS
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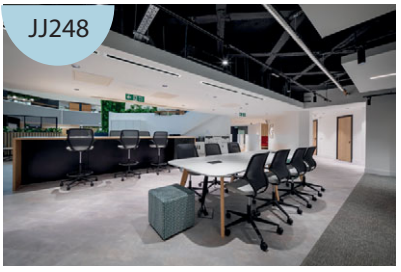
Invaluable specification advice from Domus Ventilation at Specifi 2025

Manufacturer of ventilation systems that save energy and improve indoor air quality, **Domus Ventilation** has already exhibited at four Specifi Mechanical Services events this year, with a further two booked for Glasgow on 3 June and a return to London at the end of the year on 2 December. A regular exhibitor at Specifi over the years, Domus Ventilation values these smaller, informal events for the opportunity they provide to meet face to face with specifiers. When it comes to the latter, visitors will be able to sign up to one of three Domus Ventilation's CIBSE CPD accredited courses on residential ventilation: Residential Ventilation Principles & Building Regulations; Pre-Planning Conditions & Ventilation; and MVHR Design & Best Practice.

JJ248



Gilberts takes thermal comfort to new heights

Gilberts Blackpool is continuing to build on its reputation as a pioneer with the unveiling of ThermaAstute – the most extensive range of thermally sensitive diffusers in the market.

The new range has been developed to help reduce energy consumption as part of the building's ventilation strategy, and to contribute towards enhancing occupant comfort by minimising variations in ambient temperature.

Complementing the temperature-reactive swirl diffusers already on the market, Gilberts can now offer jumbo and high-capacity linear slot diffusers, jet nozzles and drum louvres. To its knowledge, no other manufacturer has such a breadth of choice.

Gilberts' ThermaAstute thermally sensitive diffusers work by detecting even slight variations (2C) from the preset ambient temperature and adjust airflow between horizontal and vertical to maintain a comfortable, draught-free environment – within seconds.

The process ensures rapid initial warm up, and avoidance of uncomfortable draughts, hot spots and cold dumping. Further, it optimises the energy efficiency of the building services by getting the heated or cooled air to where it is most needed. This reduces unwanted load on ventilation/air conditioning plant and variation. It also helps to maximise occupant comfort.

www.gilbertsblackpool.com

JJ249

Nuaire is first UK ventilation manufacturer to use low carbon-emissions recycled & renewably produced steel

Indoor air quality and ventilation manufacturing specialist **Nuaire** has announced that its Magnelis steel based ventilations systems are now being made from XCarb recycled and renewably produced steel.

Leading the way in sustainability, Nuaire is the first UK ventilation manufacturer to switch to this innovative steel, which will result in a 64% reduction in CO_2 emissions on these products within the first year alone, compared with the same steel manufactured via the conventional steelmaking route. Products to benefit from the transition to XCarb steel include Nuaire's industry leading BPS air handling units and XBOXER XBC packaged heat recovery systems.

For customers, this transition to a lower carbon-emissions steel has only positive benefits; the quality of Nuaire's products will remain as before, with the additional benefit of helping to reduce embodied carbon within buildings. Magnelis made with XCarb recycled and renewably produced steel has an embodied carbon footprint of just 0.898 tCO_2e/t of material, which is considerably lower than the $2.51tCO_2e/t$ of material of the steel previously used

www.nuaire.co.uk/about/xcarb

step up to stair *EPDs*

As the construction industry prioritises sustainability, stair manufacturers are supporting housebuilders by offering products that have recognisable green credentials. Here, ***Ben Humphries****, Environmental and Sustainability Analyst at Staircraft looks at why Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) are becoming an important measure...*

Environmental Product Declarations are standardised documents that provide transparent and detailed information about the environmental impact of products. They are based on Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) methodologies, which evaluate the ecological footprint of a product from raw material sourcing to end-of-life disposal.

Why EPDs matter

In the construction sector, EPDs play a crucial role in signposting sustainable building practices. They allow for the comparison of different materials and products, enabling developers and specifiers to select options that align with their sustainability goals.

Crucially, EPDs are increasingly recognised by green building certification systems such as BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method). This certification often considers EPDs as part of their evaluation criteria, reinforcing the importance of choosing sustainable products for construction projects.

In terms of stairs, and depending on which material is specified, their environmental impact can be significant. That's why choosing stairs with EPD certification is so important, because it means they have been assessed for such factors as the materials used (wood, metal, concrete), the manufacturing process, transportation, installation, use, and end-of-life disposal. By analysing these factors, specifiers can make informed decisions about the most sustainable options available.

Continued overleaf...

For instance, if an EPD reveals that timber stairs from sustainably managed forests have a lower carbon footprint compared to metal or concrete stairs, as well as being manufactured using energy-efficient production methods and low-emission transportation, housebuilders might see this as a deciding factor.

As a consequence, the stair industry is on a journey to develop EPDs across entire product ranges and we are proud to be to be at the forefront in developing EPDs for all of the products we supply. We recently published two EPDs providing all the information on an accurate carbon footprint for any of the stairs or balustrades we manufacture and supply. These are both published by the EPD Hub.

The growing demand for EPDs

As awareness of climate change and environmental issues grows, governments worldwide are implementing stricter regulations that require transparency in the environmental impact of building materials. With these regulatory changes, the demand for sustainable products with EPDs is set to increase. Housebuilders and architects will need to ensure that the materials they use not only meet safety and design standards but also contribute to reduced carbon footprints and overall sustainability.

Stair manufacturers are increasingly focusing on developing products that adhere to sustainable practices. Achieving this important certification involves using renewable materials – and timber stairs have a definite advantage in this area – reducing energy consumption during manufacturing and implementing waste reduction strategies.

By obtaining EPDs for their products, stair manufacturers can provide verifiable data to support their sustainability claims.

It's worth verifying that your supplier's EPDs have been checked by an independent expert LCA assessor, so they can be relied upon as a true, unbiased reflection of the environmental impacts that the product is likely to have. Conversely, unverified EPDs have not been subject to an independent third party review so these may be subject to error, misinterpretation, or bias.

The future of EPDs in the stairs category

As the construction industry continues its focus on sustainability, the demand for transparency regarding environmental impacts will grow. We believe that EPDs will continue play a greater role in this shift, providing the data needed to support sustainable decision-making.

Stair manufacturers that offer EPD certified products play a vital role in helping housebuilders achieve their sustainability targets. Likewise, by offering transparent and detailed information about the environmental impact of their developments, developers allow their buyers to make informed decisions that align with emerging regulations and market demands.

Utilising products with EPDs enables developers to market their properties as environmentally friendly, appealing to a growing demographic of eco-conscious consumers.

By providing transparent, comprehensive information on the environmental impact of building products, EPDs enable more sustainable decision-making and contribute to reducing the overall environmental footprint of construction activities.

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JJ24

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ALIRAIL Modular Balustrades
A-FENCE Aluminium Fencing

Bisca reveals key architectural principles for designing a showstopping *staircase*

Staircase design is without a doubt, subjective. Here we assess if there can be a defined process which assures the most beautiful and spectacular result every time. No matter the prestige, location or style of a property, if a staircase is to fit perfectly within its home and surrounding space, there are common architectural principles to consider.

This year is a time of reflection for world renowned staircase specialist, ***Bisca****. As the business celebrates 30 years in the staircase industry, their diverse range of projects from all over the world, offers valuable insight. In two of the firm's most recent projects, we review their input as staircase design-makers; evaluating how they ensure the true potential of a staircase is reached...*

From Malton to Montana, two contrasting projects

"These two projects have been contrasting in many respects, yet equally identical in others," explains Richard McLane, founder and design director at Bisca. "While a staircase project's success relies on the early stages of planning, including a property's architectural features; building specification; structural boundaries; and internal aesthetics – what is often overlooked is a client's emotional expectations."

Bisca's portfolio pushes the limitations of staircase engineering to new heights, with many of their projects appearing to be structurally impossible at first sight. Seeking to achieve a flawless transition between different materials, while creating a tactile connection that cannot be replicated elsewhere in a home; these are not outcomes that are achieved by chance.

Montana (USA) – large private ski residence

Client brief: An open brief for Bisca to work their magic, creating a super-cali-fradga-listic staircase, with a strong sculptural presence
Layout: Two flight helical staircase with open rise treads
Direction: Ground floor descending to lower ground, then to an extensive basement
Materials: Oak, glass, leather, steel, liquid metal finish, integrated lighting

"There isn't anybody who is able to offer what Bisca can do, I know, I've searched the market myself" – Project Architect

Limitations: Pre-defined / inflexible space and position of supporting beams
Technical: The staircase is supported through its base and fixed to landing edges at each level. Large maximum tread width of 1.8m, designed with a floating appearance and no visible fixings
Logistics: Transportation 4,000+ miles, including two core structural sections, with multiple landing sections, plus individual staircase features
Status: Design completed. Currently in manufacture in Bisca's specialist workshop premises. Installation planned

Key architectural considerations

A newly built ski residence in Montana, situated on a mountain side; its staircase comprising a two-flight helical structure connecting three floors. Descending from the upper living space next to the main front door, the staircase transitions to a lower floor of bedrooms and further, to a ski boot room with impressive panoramic views and more living accommodation.

The original building design compromised the staircase's sculptural potential. Bisca worked closely with the project engineer, architect and contracting team in America to meet the brief - adjusting loading beams to optimise staircase layout, comfort, rise and how its form flowed within the space.

To accommodate a floating appearance and assure structural integrity, each staircase tread has a steel core wrapped in engineered timber, meeting both technical and aesthetic requirements. A wide range of materials are connected sensitively, to create a seamless and breathtaking finish.

"The staircase achieves exactly what I'd envisaged and more" – Property Developer

Malton (UK) – conversion of agricultural grain silos

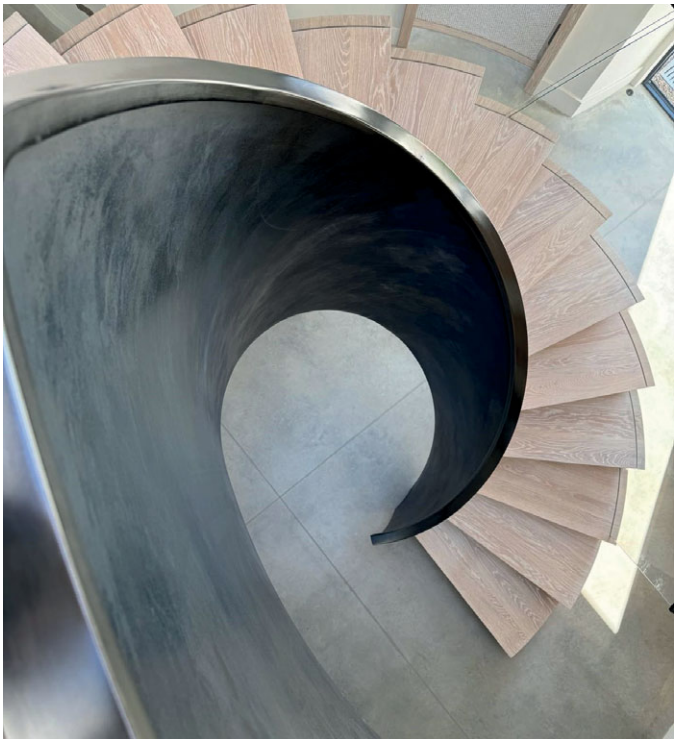
Client brief: To create a feature staircase which resembles a bolt of lightning dropping down through the glass roof above
Layout: Single flight helical staircase with sweeping cut string treads
Direction: Ground floor upwards, to meet first floor landing
Materials: Oak, steel, curved glass, waxed metal finish
Limitations: Replicating the same liquid finish on a range of different materials
Technical: Structurally challenging, need to minimise deflection due to design, large feature wall to the core, installed in one piece to create a solid yet delicate structure
Logistics: Transportation 10 miles to the property, the main body as three separate parts. The central steel wall in one continuous piece using bespoke fabricated trolleys
Status: Staircase designed, manufactured and installed by Bisca

Key architectural considerations

In contrast to Montana, the staircase for an agricultural conversion in Malton is positioned centrally within a cluster of interconnected grain silos. A helical layout rises from the ground floor to the first floor and has been designed to represent a bolt of lightning dropping out of the sky.

In this case the building's steel frame was specified to accommodate the actual staircase loadings, making our client's chosen design a reality from the start. Precision engineering allows for the staircase to rest on a slim and elegant point of contact as it meets the ground floor. This brought structural challenges where steel works and plating have been concealed to reduce deflection.

The metallic finish applied to the staircase's central steel wall is matched on the slim and elegant handrail. This has been achieved



using bonded polymers; thereafter lighting was integrated and concealed within the inner handrail to highlight its form and the patina of the feature wall.

Taking a staircase from concept to reality

"It's essential that technical aspects of staircase engineering are not allowed to stifle the creative element of the process," remarks Richard. "Both must work hand in hand, where buildability is fully integrated to the concept design stage, assuring a client's practical and personal aspirations are transformed into a reality."

To plan for all aspects of a bespoke staircase design, Bisca undertakes one, if not two detailed staircase surveys early in the process. Through collaborating closely with project stakeholders such as architects, interior designers and contractors, no stone is left unturned and a clear and collective vision is formulated at the outset.

"For me, this is one of the most exciting stages of what we do; it sparks the creativity required to develop a staircase which will take your breath away – striking an emotional connection with all that cross its path. To see a concept finally come into its true form is always a deeply rewarding experience," concludes Richard.

www.bisca.co.uk

JJ26

Newcastle United Football Club enhances fans' experience with Stannah escalators

Newcastle United Football Club, a cherished home for generations of fans since 1892, has introduced two new escalators as part of a refurbishment of its on-site merchandising outlet.

Through close collaboration with Newcastle United Football Club, the **Stannah** Major Projects team designed and delivered a bespoke escalator system, offering seamless transportation and significantly enhancing user experience.

The works

The project entailed a full refurbishment of the club's shop following a £30m deal with Adidas as NUFC's official kit supplier. This included removing the existing escalator, and designing and installing two new escalators to integrate with the updated layout.

Stannah Lift Services worked alongside 442 Design, a leading interior design company, to ensure the new escalators would seamlessly integrate into the architectural framework. Together, they identified necessary structural changes, including adjustments to the pit area to address conflicts between the stadiums' structural supports and the original layout.

Stannah also carried out a detailed evaluation of the existing escalator and its surrounding infrastructure to find the best and safest removal solution. While the client liaised and initiated the removal with the demolition company, Stannah removed key components, such as the steps and drive unit, to facilitate easier manoeuvring of the escalator sections.

The challenge

The client set a tight budget and a strict timescale in order for the work to be completed in a timely manner and offer value to NUFC fans. To address this, Stannah provided detailed guidance on an escalator solution that met the building and shop layout requirements while balancing cost and efficiency.

Stannah faced other challenges as logistics were disrupted due to conflicts impacting the Suez Canal, which made it unsafe and inaccessible for ships to pass through. As a result, logistic companies were forced to reroute deliveries around the Cape of Good Hope, causing significant delays in the delivery of materials.
To mitigate further delays and to meet the store opening deadline, Stannah increased on-site labour resources to ensure the installation, commissioning and testing proceeded as planned.

The integration of the new escalators also demanded technical precision to address structural modifications to ensure the installation aligned seamlessly with the architectural framework and complied with rigorous safety standards. Extensive testing was conducted by Stannah's engineers to confirm the escalators' safety and performance, ensuring they met the BS115 standard.

Stannah provided comprehensive training on escalator operation, maintenance and safety to the building management team and store staff, providing all the skills and knowledge needed to manage and operate the systems efficiently.

The escalator solution

Stannah proposed the installation of two new A2C escalators to improve traffic flow between the ground and shop's mezzanine levels, ensuring seamless access and greater convenience for users.

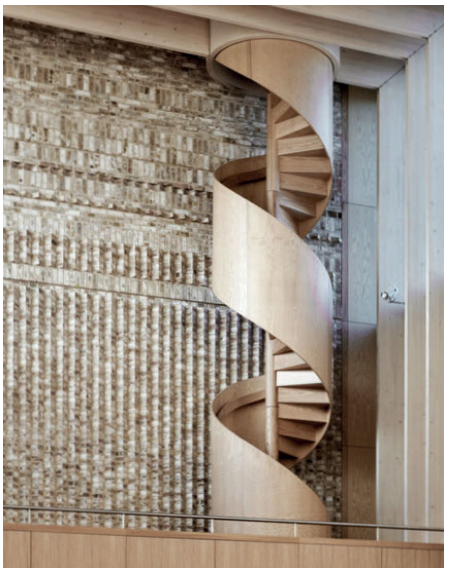
With a high-quality design, the escalators' design focused on minimising friction, vibration and noise, delivering a smooth and quiet ride capable of efficiently managing increased foot traffic during peak periods.

To maximise energy efficiency and to provide flexibility on how the client would like to use the escalators, Stannah provided features such as stop-and-start technology and reduced speed operation so they can choose the correct operational philosophy to suit their current or future requirements. Star/delta bypass was also provided which provides redundancy in case of VVVF inverter failure.

Stannah's A2C escalator package is a reliable solution for commercial, retail, hotel and office environments. With a rise of 3.0 to 15.8m and speeds ranging from 0.5 to 0.75m/s, these escalators are finished with a glass balustrade and natural anodised aluminium handrail guide frames for a modern and durable design.

All of Stannah's escalators are fully compliant with the latest British Standards, including BS5656 and BS115, and are equipped with the latest passenger safety features.

Find out more information on escalators and moving walkways or contact Stannah for a range of lift products and services at **www.stannahlifts.co.uk**



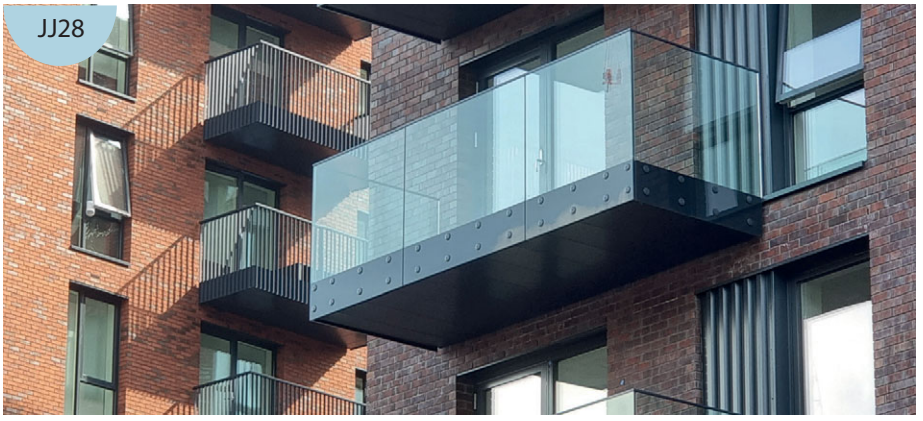
Spiral UK bespoke staircases – excellence at every step

With 40 years of experience in the design, manufacture and installation of custom staircases, **Spiral UK** is the industry leader when it comes to bespoke staircase solutions. Spiral delivers a full in-house service from concept to completion, with resident design engineers, highly skilled craftspeople in its on-site factory, and expert installation teams providing a streamlined process from start to finish.

An impressive staircase, whether spiral or straight, can help to create a breathtaking first impression in any space, domestic or commercial. If you're looking for a way to create real impact in your property, installing a bespoke staircase in a beautiful finish is a fantastic design option. Spiral UK's material choices include timber, concrete, glass and steel in a variety of finishes, with a wide range of options for balustrades and handrails to further complement your vision.

The myriad design possibilities that Spiral UK offers enable the team to craft the ultimate bespoke staircase for every individual project, from workplaces to public spaces and homes. Whether spiral, helical, straight or cantilevered, Spiral UK has the expertise to create the ideal staircase for any space, and you can relax in the knowledge that your vision is in safe hands.

Spiral UK is a trusted industry leader with an impressive portfolio of work completed for a broad range of clients, from private homeowners to multinational companies, and its dedicated team really knows how to bring an idea to life. If you'd like to discuss the options available for your bespoke staircase, give the team a call on 0330 123 3447, email i**nfo@spiral.uk.com** or visit the website for more information and inspiration at **www.spiral.uk.com**



Seamless installation and striking design

Situated on a quiet stretch of Birmingham's historic canal network, Snow Hill Wharf is a standout residential development by St Joseph, the Midlands-focused division of the Berkeley Group. At the heart of the project's architectural appeal are the sleek, contemporary balconies supplied by **Sapphire Balconies**, whose Glide-On aluminium Cassette system – with both vertical bar balustrade and Crystal frameless, structural glass options – help define the building's elegant aesthetic and premium finish.

Completed in 2021, Snow Hill Wharf offers an enviable lifestyle package with residents enjoying 24-hour concierge service, a fully equipped gym, spa facilities, cinema room, business lounge, and private gardens – all set within walking distance of Birmingham city centre's dining, retail, and entertainment offerings.

When St Joseph turned to Sapphire for a balcony solution, one of the key challenges was the lack of on-site storage. Balconies had to be delivered and installed directly from the delivery vehicle without the opportunity to store them on-site. Sapphire's offsite manufacturing and logistics model provided a seamless solution. Each balcony was fabricated and assembled offsite in a controlled environment to ensure quality, then delivered just in time for installation, enabling a swift, efficient process that reduced disruption and maintained build momentum.

This project also marked the first collaboration between Sapphire and the newly formed St Joseph division, although Sapphire's longstanding relationship with the wider Berkeley Group helped ensure strong communication and coordination throughout. The result is a development that not only enhances Birmingham's skyline but also sets a new benchmark for quality and efficiency in high-density residential construction.

https://balconies.global/

JJ260

GF Building Flow Solutions' debut presentation at ISH 2025 confirms interest and relevance

The first global showcasing of the new GF division **GF Building Flow Solutions** was a success. Visitors from all over the world discovered the 1,200m² booth under the headline 'Leading with Water'. The new combined portfolio from GF and Uponor, fueled with innovations, addresses sustainability challenges, customer needs, and pressing megatrends. Around 163,000 visitors from 150 countries visited the trade fair for HVAC + Water in Frankfurt. "This year's ISH focus laid on digitalization and sustainability in the building and construction industry", said Jonas Brennwald. "Our portfolio not only addresses these needs, but drives them – for planners, developers, wholesalers, and installers. We empower our partners to provide solutions for improved water hygiene, to speed up the transition to green buildings and accelerate services with Artificial Intelligence integration and prefabrication."

JJ261

Combining traditional practices with modern innovation

Haddonstone is a world-leading manufacturer of garden, landscape and architectural cast stonework. When the business started, it utilised just one material, Haddonstone, a semi-dry cast limestone used as an alternative to natural stone. Today, around 75% of the company's orders go through its recently expanded TecStone wet-cast department. This material is the favoured choice for larger architectural projects as it is designed to meet demanding performance criteria and because it can incorporate structural reinforcement. Haddonstone's product range includes façade stonework (porticos, columns, door surrounds), wall and window dressings, garden buildings, balustrade, steps and paving.

Why choose SterlingOSB Zero over plywood?

JJ262

West Fraser's SterlingOSB Zero, is often seen in restaurants, exhibitions and retail outlets where the theme is 'natural', 'eco', and 'earthy'. It is also commonly used as a hoarding panel. The fundamental engineered panel is, most commonly however, used in most new and refurbishment building projects. It's a precision-engineered square edge, and tongue & groove board, which is used in flooring, roofing and offsite cassette or timber frame manufacturing. Plywood can probably do the same job; but OSB excels for both practical and economic reasons and is more aesthetically pleasing. The Zero refers to the fact that there is no added formaldehyde in the formulation which is important for the health of contractors and building occupants. As a bonus, zero formaldehyde resins are made of bio-based feedstocks which gives them a lower carbon footprint.

JJ263

Making light work of wastewater and maintenance

DAB Pumps' Genix range of automatic lifting stations are easy to install, operate and maintain across a wide range of domestic and light commercial applications.

Available in Genix, Genix WL and Genix VT models, the system offers a quiet, reliable solution for managing wastewater in spaces where gravity drainage isn't an option. To ensure installers won't be overwhelmed by complex options, the range has been cleverly streamlined to just three core models that cover a wide range of installation requirements. The Genix and Genix WL, with a newly designed, robust macerator and an anti-odour system, are suitable for toilets, showers, washbasins or bidets, while the Genix VT, which works at temperatures up to 90°C, has been developed specifically for grey water applications, such as sinks, washing machines or dishwashers.

The Genix version has a frontal WC discharge while the Genix WL version has a side toilet outlet, specially designed for use with wall-hung sanitary ware or where the space behind the toilet is too small for the standard Genix. Each version comes in a 110 model that allows for one additional utility such as a sink and a 130 model that expands this to three additional utilities, including low-drain appliances like showers, bidets or bathtubs. The VT versions follow the same model pattern: Genix VT 010 allows one grey water connection while VT 030 supports up to three.

www.dabpumps.com

JJ264

AdvancedLive provides modern protection for historic Blists Hill Victorian Town

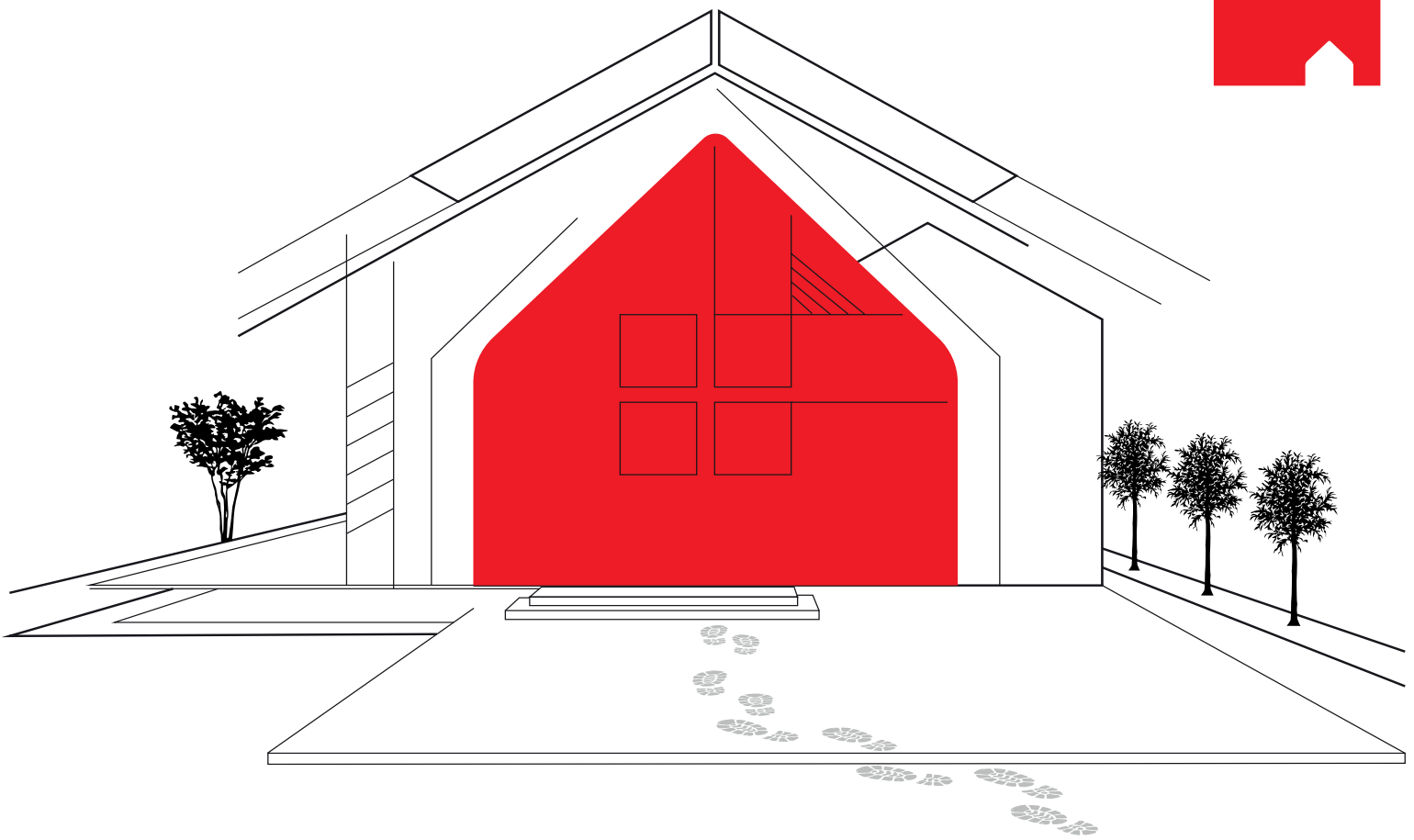
Blists Hill Victorian Town museum in the Ironbridge Gorge now benefits from a comprehensive **Advanced** fire protection system designed to improve safety, simplify management, and provide real-time insights across its expansive historical site.

The existing fire alarm system was due for renewal and the Trust was looking for something with better functionality. The site now features seven separate Advanced MxPro 5 panels which are connected to the AdvancedLive smart monitoring and management platform. This allows the independent panels to be unified into a single, cohesive interface, creating a virtual network for the fire system. This approach eliminates the need for additional hardware like separate BMS interfaces or modules, making the solution cost effective and simple to install. By making the fire system status available anytime, anywhere via any internet-enabled device, AdvancedLive provides the site's security and facilities teams with seamless, centralised management to suit their location and schedule.

Designed with end users in mind, AdvancedLive allows non-specialist staff to monitor fire system status through an intuitive interface that features a choice of map or list views. Real-time notifications alert the team to fires, faults, or device disablements, enabling them to act quickly, even when off site.

www.advancedco.com

crash
charity



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JJ29

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